

COAL MINING IN FAIRBURY, ILLINOIS

by

Dale C. Maley

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PUBLISHED BY:

Artephius Publishing

Coal Mining in Fairbury, Illinois

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Foreword

Fairbury is a small town located in Central Illinois. It is 100 miles south of Chicago and 60 miles east of Peoria. It was founded in 1857 when the railroad first crossed Central Illinois.

In 1861, John Marsh, and son Henry Marsh, dug 200 feet down just west of Fairbury and found coal. Their discovery of coal in the Illinois prairie, prompted the discovery of more coal through-out Central Illinois.

Fairbury quickly had four main operating coal mines. These mines created jobs that attracted miners all the way from Europe. The population of Fairbury exploded from 269 in 1860 to 2,324 in 1890. The largest coal mine continued to operate until 1941.

It is hoped this book helps to inform current Fairbury residents about how important coal mining was to the development of Fairbury.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank Shana Kay Koehl for her assistance in updating this book. Shana provided valuable additional information that is included in the most recent version of this book.

* * * * *

CHAPTER 1

Author's Background and Interest in Fairbury History

The author is a 5th generation native of Fairbury. He attended Fairbury-Cropsey High School. The author married another 5th generation Fairbury native, Connie Sue Wells. He then graduated from the University of Illinois with a B.S. in Agricultural Engineering. Later, he graduated from Illinois State University with a Masters in Business Administration. The author worked at Caterpillar Inc. for 36 years and retired at the end of 2015.

One of my grandmothers, Francis Ann Bodley Maley, was the only Livingston County Nurse until her death in 1968. She was a very short lady. Many Fairbury current residents probably got a shot in school from her.

One of my grandfathers, Harold Henline Dameron, worked his whole life and retired from the TP&W railroad. His wife, Beulah Elizabeth Cornwell Dameron, taught school in Fairbury country schools and at Edison grade school in Fairbury.

In 2009, my father, Clarence Charles Maley, passed away. My mother continued to live at the farm house for three more winters. At that point, she announced she was moving to town.

We had to clean out the old farm house before we sold it. It contained materials from five generations of our family. I ended up with most of the historical information. I used this information to trace our family tree back to the various countries in Europe. I made four printed scrapbooks of our family history and gave copies to other family members.

The genealogy search of our family history did not find any horse thieves or murderers in our family tree. Our most famous ancestor was Major William Bodley. He fought in Revolutionary War with General Washington and had farm in Valley Forge. It is likely that Washington's army spent their terrible winter on his farm, but no written verification of this has been found. His son went to Indiana. His grandson, John Edward Bodley Sr. moved from Indiana to Lodemia, north of Fairbury in 1852.

On my mother's side, William Hughes Cornwell fought in Civil War. He was shot in the hip, captured, sent to the dreaded Andersonville prison. The death rate was about 33% at Andersonville due mostly to starvation and associated diseases. The prison commander was tried and hung as war criminal shortly after the end of the Civil War. The prison commander was the only man prosecuted at the end of the Civil War. My ancestor survived five months at Andersonville. He is buried at Princeville, north of Peoria.

Also on my mother's side, was John Russell Litchfield, from Flanagan. He was blown up and killed when trying to rescue comrade from front lines in France in World War I. He received the highest medals from both the United States and France. The USS Litchfield Navy ship was built and named after him. One of his uniforms is in the Pontiac War Museum.

Then Bryan Spence started the Facebook History page. It has grown to about 2,000 members. When it started, my mother and sister said I liked history and I should check it out. Because I already had so many family history items, I quickly became the main poster.

This led to researching and writing ten Fairbury history books. These e-books are sold online including on Amazon. Printed copies of these books have been donated to the Dominy Memorial Library, Fairbury Echoes Museum, and the Pontiac library. I have also given numerous lectures to different area civic groups. I am also on the board of the Fairbury Echoes Museum.

CHAPTER 2

How Fairbury Got Started

In 1857, the TP&W railroad was being laid from Peoria to Indiana. Octave Chanute was in charge of the railroad crew. Octave was trained as a Civil Engineer. Chanute went on to a very interesting career in aviation. He helped the Wright brothers. The Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul was named after him. He is often called the Father of Aviation.

Caleb Patton, local farmer, offered Chanute a deal. If he would run the new railroad through his farm, he would give Chanute half of the city lots. Chanute took the deal. There was a problem. Several other farmers were not happy with this plan.

Chanute then demonstrated his creativity. He had his crew sneak in and complete the railroad on a weekend when the Pontiac courthouse was closed. No injunction could be obtained on a week-end because the court house was closed. There was a State law that once a locomotive had been run over the track, you can not remove track.

Chanute wanted to call it Pattonville, but they decided on Fairbury instead. Immediately, there were houses moved from Avoca into Fairbury. Some houses were moved to McDowell and Kankakee. Can you imagine horses moving entire houses!

Somehow Fairbury got miss-spelled on its application for a U.S. Post Office. It was called Fairburg for a couple of years until it was corrected. A few post cards exist with the Fairburg post mark. Nobody knows why Fairbury was selected as the town name.

The only other Fairbury in the U.S. is Fairbury, Nebraska. Woodford G. McDowell, a capitalist from Fairbury, Illinois, had seen how a railroad can create a new town. He claimed 160 acres and gave 80 acres of his land for a town site in Nebraska.

The streets in Fairbury, Nebraska, are named in a similar fashion to the streets in Fairbury, Illinois. The north and south streets in both towns are named from First to Eighth streets. In Fairbury, Illinois, the east and west streets are named for tree types. In Fairbury, Nebraska, the east and west streets are named A to H streets.

CHAPTER 3

History of Illinois Coal Mining

The Spring 1994 edition of the SIU magazine titled *Concerning Coal: Tidbits About Coal for Public Consumption*, has an excellent article about the early history of coal mining in Illinois. An excerpt of this article is shown below:

Illinois can be proud of its coal legacy. Coal mining is an industry carved by the toil of our ancestors. It was not an easy task in those days long ago when transportation and machinery were virtually non-existent; when glacial drift deposits camouflaged the rich mineral resources in the central part of the state; and when geological techniques had not yet been developed to explore the wealthy depths.

But our forefathers persevered. These obstacles were met and overcome, and today Illinois can be proud of its coal mining industry and look forward to a prosperous future despite setbacks and disasters that have plagued the mining industry since its inception,

The first sighting of coal on the North American continent was in Illinois. Joliet and Marquette reported coal in the Illinois River bluffs near the Ottawa-Utica area in 1673. The journal of Father Hennepin, another early explorer, also reports sightings in this area. But at that time, coal's potential was not known. In comparison to the usefulness of salt, stone, sand, and gravel, coal was probably the least desirable of Illinois' mineral resources, used only rarely for blacksmithing. It would be many years before any significant effort was made to utilize Illinois' massive coal resources.

The early apathy toward coal mining was due largely to the lack of means to transport the heavy, bulky product from the mine to areas miles away. Therefore, coal was mined chiefly for domestic uses until the early 19th century.

The first mines were located near rivers, and the coal was removed from exposed seams on the bluffs. Early settlers believed that Illinois coal deposits were confined to these river valleys, and consequently, shaft mining was not introduced until the early 1840s.

In 1810, the first recorded commercial shipment of Illinois coal was made from a Jackson County mine. The coal was loaded onto rafts and floated down the Mississippi, then down to New Orleans. In the early 1820s, mines in the Peoria area began shipping to New Orleans.

Signs of growth in the coal industry were evident during the next several years. The significant factor in this early progress was the location of the largest city in the West, St. Louis. Situated just across the Mississippi from some of Illinois' rich coal deposits, St. Louisans were willing to pay premium prices for Illinois coal to replace the inconvenience of wood for their heat and power source.

In 1837, Governor Reynolds furthered this effort by building the first railroad from a point near Illinoistown (now East St. Louis), where he owned coal mining land, to a point on the Mississippi River just across from St. Louis. The Coal-Mine Bluff Railroad transported coal from area mines to the river, crossing over 6 miles of wooden rails. It was operated by horsepower, but was a vast improvement over the former methods. (Coal at one time was wrapped in hides and rolled down to the riverbank. Later horses pulled a box strapped between two saplings; and later still, coal was hauled by the wagon load.)

The advent of the railroad in the early 1850s marked a major expansion period for the Illinois coal industry. Bulk quantities could now be moved to distant locations, opening up prosperous new markets for coal. In 1854, the Galena and Chicago Railroad purchased five coal-burning locomotives. The success of this venture prompted other railroads to do the same. Thus the railroad industry was established as a prime burner of Illinois coal.

The growth of the two industries is so intimately entwined that it is hard to say which dominated the scene. For many years to come, coal mines prompted the building of new railroads, railroads encouraged the digging of additional coal mines, and the combination served to establish Illinois as the industrial center and the transportation hub of the nation.

Development of major industrial centers like Peoria, Rockford, Springfield, and Decatur was aided by the availability of an abundant supply of Illinois coal. Railroads, too, served to foster the growth of major industries at various sites along their rapidly expanding lines. Cities flourished, demanding more coal and more railroads.

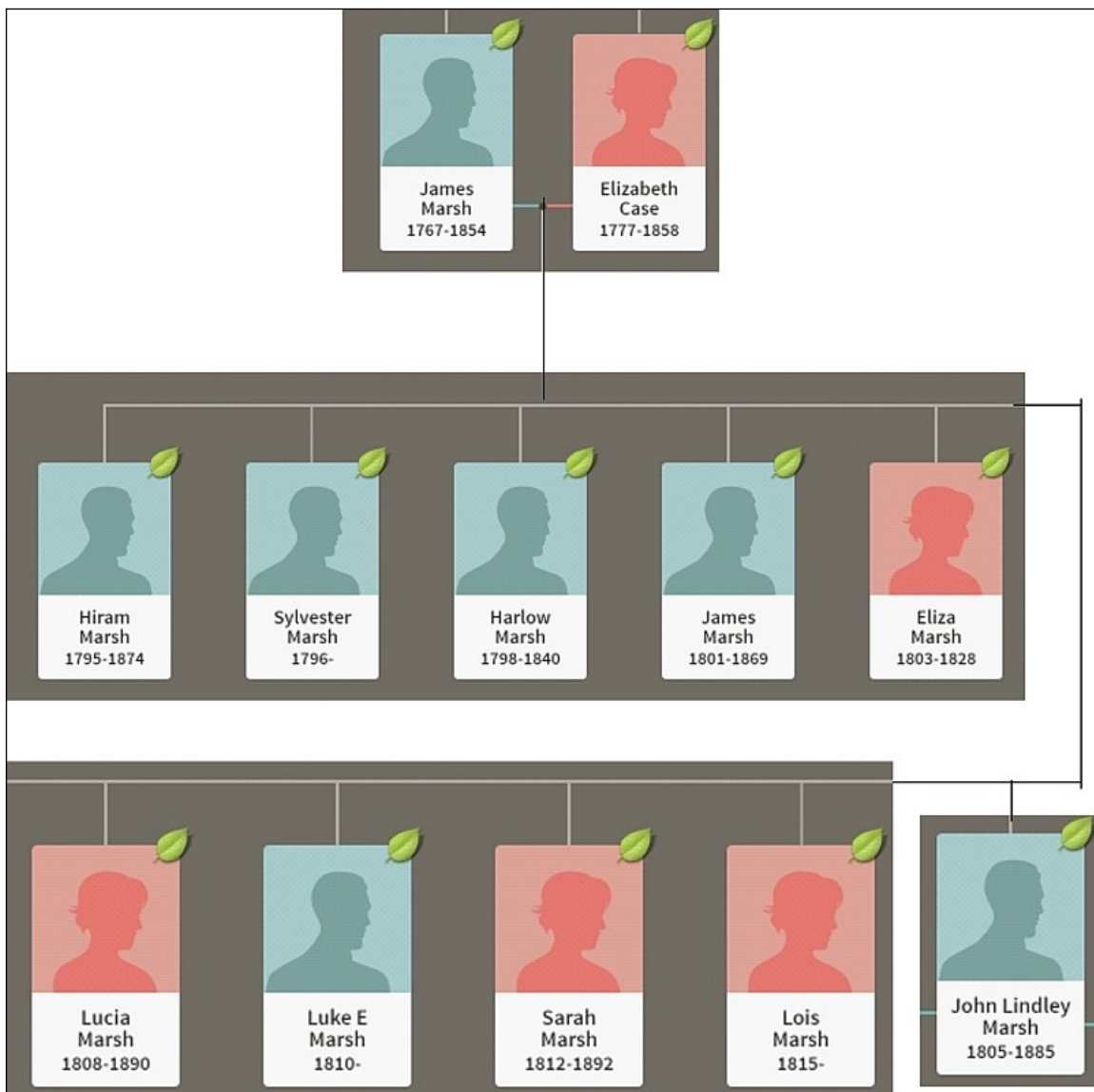
By 1880, the Illinois coal industry was firmly established, due largely to the fuel demands of larger cities like St. Louis and Chicago. However, this was only the beginning. Illinois coal production gained momentum during the last quarter of the century. By 1900, at least fifty-two Illinois counties were producing coal, and nine of those produced more than 1 million tons a year.

CHAPTER 4

John and Henry Marsh Family

James Marsh and Elizabeth Case

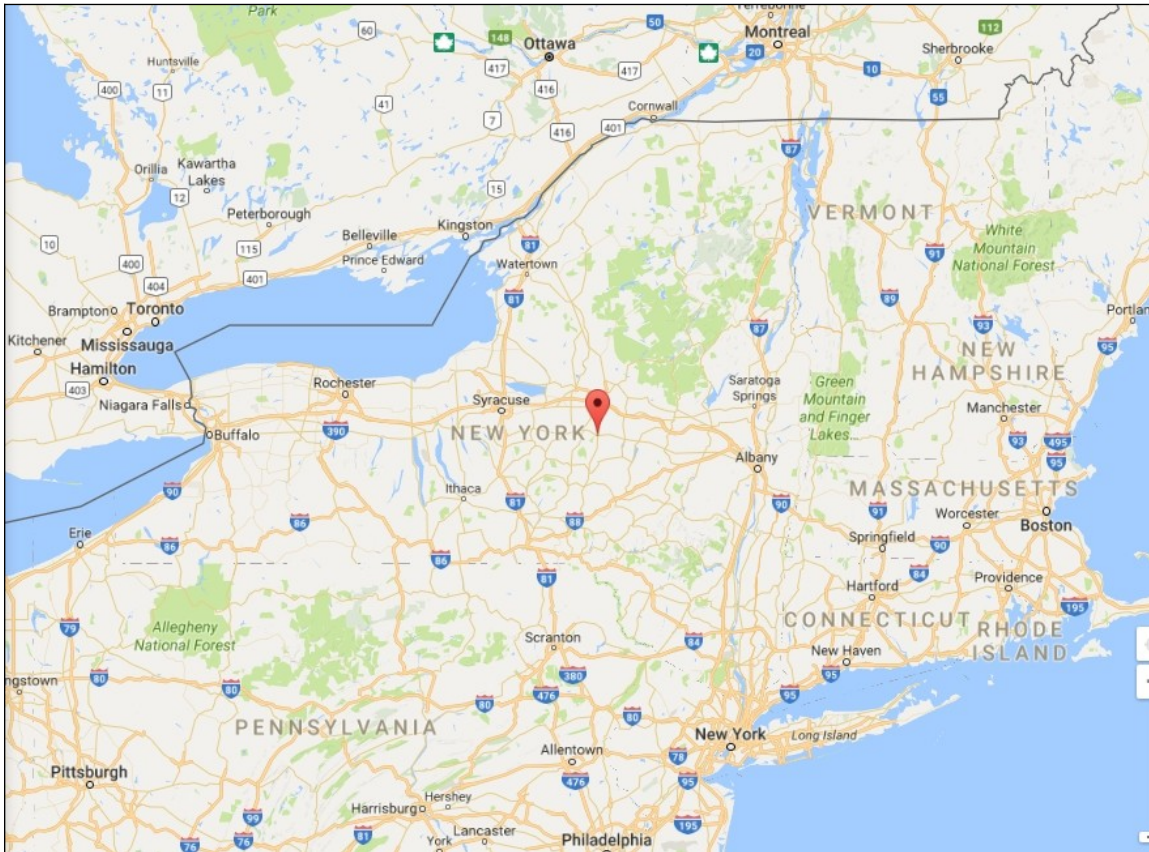
John Lindley Marsh, 1805 - 1885, was the son of James Marsh 1767 - 1854 and Elizabeth Case 1777 - 1858. James was born in New Hartford, Connecticut and died in Bridgewater, New York. Elizabeth was born in Middlesex, New Jersey and died in Bridgewater, New York. They had a huge family with ten children.



John Lindley Marsh was born in the middle of this group of children. James and Elizabeth Marsh are buried in the Sauquoit Valley Cemetery in Clayville, NY.

John Lindley Marsh

John Lindley Marsh was born in 1805 in Bridgewater, New York.



Bridgewater is in the center of New York State, about half-way between Syracuse and Albany. In 2010, Bridgewater had a population of 470 people.

First Marriage of John Lindley Marsh

John Lindley Marsh married Caroline Benham 1810 - 1856. They had one son, Henry L. Marsh, born in 1834 in West Winfield, NY. They had another son, John Frederick, who died in infancy on July 14, 1842. The infant son is buried next to his mother in the Washington Glendale Cemetery. The author visited this grave in Washington, Illinois.

Moving from New York to Washington, Illinois

In 1837, the John Marsh family moved from New York to Tremont, Illinois. In 1840, they moved to Washington, Illinois. In 1844, they moved to Kenosha, Wisconsin. In 1847 they moved to Chicago. In 1853, they returned to Washington, Illinois.

On November 17, 1856, Caroline Benham, the first wife of John L. Marsh, died at age 46. She was buried in the Washington cemetery close to her infant son, with her own tomb stone.

Rubbing Elbows with Abraham Lincoln

In the June 17, 1858, edition of the Daily Illinois State Journal (in Springfield, Illinois), John L. Marsh of Tazewell County was listed as a delegate to the Illinois State Republican Convention.

Tazewell....8 votes. --T. J. Pickett, Dr. B. H. Harris, David Kyes, Daniel Cheover, John L. Marsh, R. N. Cullom, G. W. Minier, John H. Harllu.

It is interesting to note that Abraham Lincoln was at the same convention! Lincoln was a delegate from Sangamon County. Future Fairbury citizen John L. Marsh probably "rubbed elbows" with Abraham Lincoln at this convention.

Second Marriage of John L. Marsh

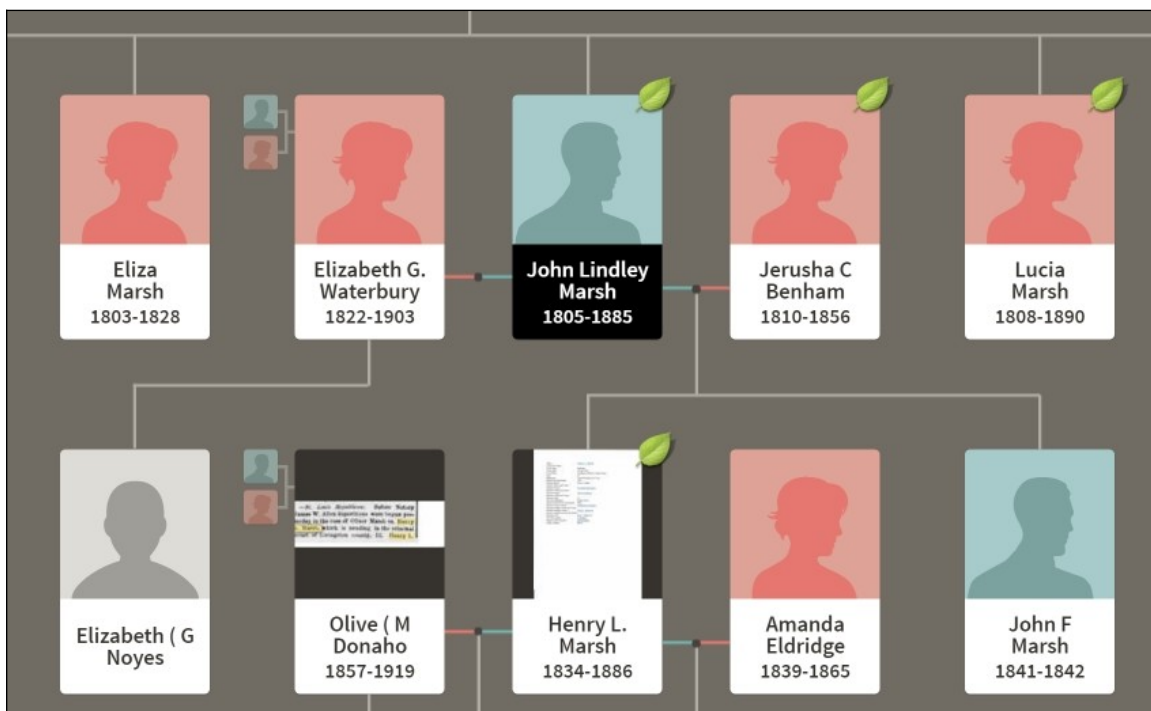
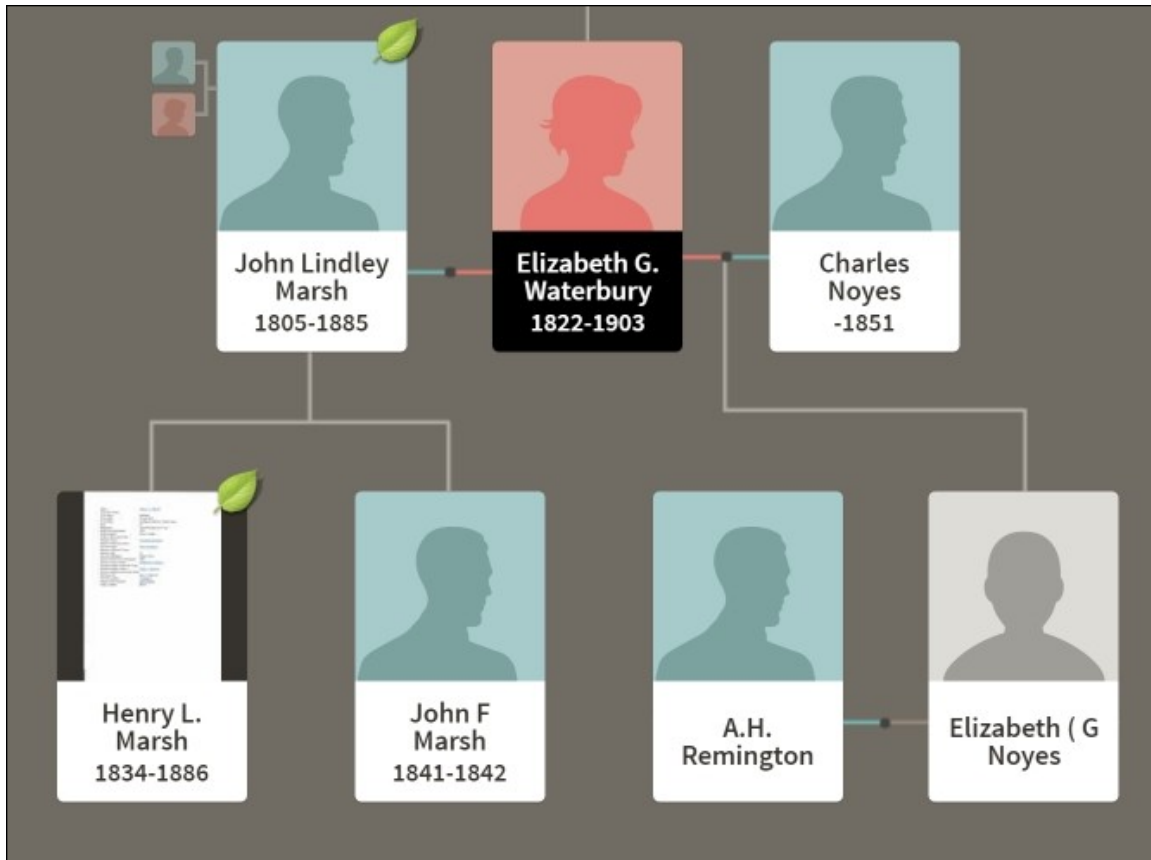
In 1859, after the death of his first wife on Nov 27, 1856, John L. Marsh married Elizabeth G. Waterbury in New York City. She was a widow and was married to Mr. Charles Noyes. Elizabeth G. Waterbury and Charles Noyes had a daughter named Elizabeth (Lizzie) G. Noyes. Charles Noyes died in 1851.

In the 1860 census, John L. Marsh is listed as living in Washington, Illinois, in Tazewell County. He was age 54 per the census. His second wife, Elizabeth G. Waterbury, was living with him and she was age 39. He listed his occupation as merchant. No children were living with them at this time.

According to John L. Marsh's obituary in the April 2, 1885, Blade newspaper, John and his second wife moved to Fairbury in the Fall of 1861.

John L. Marsh Family Tree

His family trees are shown below:



Elizabeth Gertrude Noyes Marsh Obituary

John Marsh's second wife died on April 21, 1903. Her obituary from the April 24, 1903 Blade says she was buried in Fairbury's Graceland Cemetery.

Mrs. Elizabeth G. Marsh

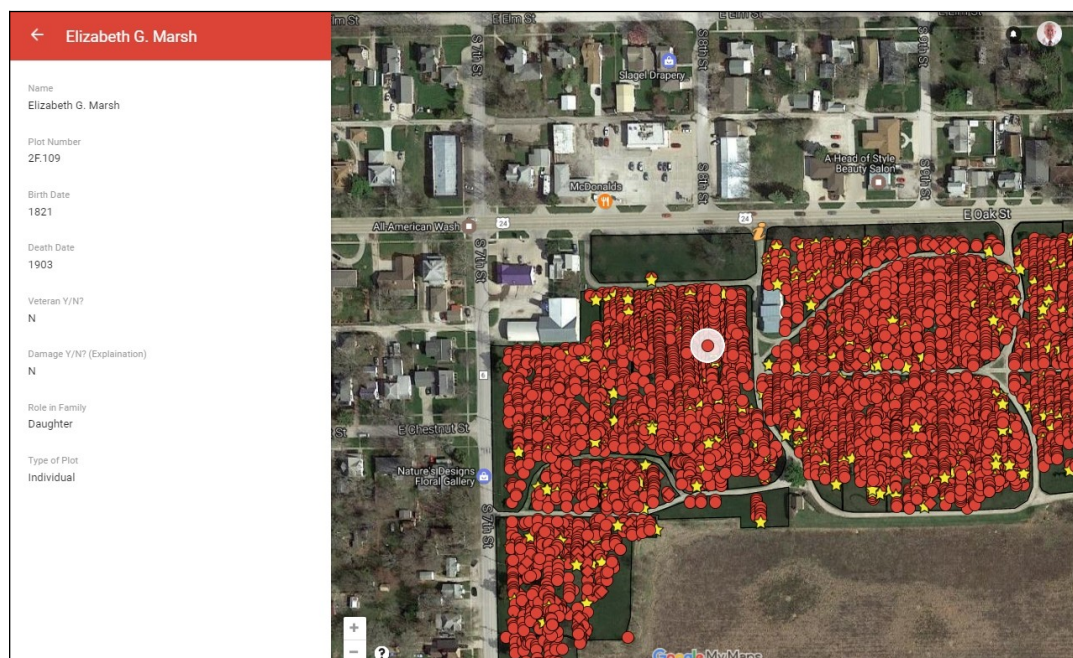
Mrs. Elizabeth Gertrude Marsh passed away at her home in this city Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock after an illness of but a few hours. She was taken ill late in the afternoon and medical aid was summoned at once, but efforts were unavailing.

Mrs. Marsh was one of Fairbury's pioneer citizens. She was born in New York July 22, 1822. She was united in marriage to John L. Marsh in 1858 and in 1861 she came to Fairbury. Mr. Marsh sunk and operated the first coal mine in this section of the state. He passed away eighteen years ago.

The deceased was one of the best of women. Kind hearted and charitable, she made of everyone she came in contact with and accomplished much good. She was an active member of the Presbyterian church almost from its foundation in this city until her death. She taught for several years in the Sunday school and took a sincere interest in the welfare of the organization and aided its growth in every way possible. Living an earnest, conscientious Christian life, she passed away in the full faith of her redeemer. She leaves one daughter, Mrs. A. H. Remington. The numerous friends of the deceased deeply regret her death and sympathize with the bereaved family.

The funeral services were held Thursday morning at 10:30 at the family home. Rev. C. S. Davies officiating and were largely attended. The floral offerings were numerous and beautiful. The remains were laid to rest in the Fairbury cemetery.

Her grave stone location in the Fairbury Graceland Cemetery is shown below:



Henry L. Marsh

At age 25, Henry L. Marsh married Amada Eldridge, age 20, on August 4, 1859, per the Illinois marriage database in Ancestry.com:

Amanda Eldridge

in the Illinois, Marriages, 1851-1900

Name:	Amanda Eldridge
Gender:	Female
Spouse Name:	Henry L Marsh
Marriage Date:	4 Aug 1859
Marriage County:	Tazewell
Comments:	This record can be found at the County Court Records, Film # 1314686 - 1314688.

In the 1860 census, Henry L. Marsh was living next door to his father in Washington, Illinois. Henry was 25 years old. Amanda Eldridge Marsh, age 20 was living in Henry's house as his wife.

1860 United States Federal Census for Henry L Marsh												
Illinois > Tazewell > Washington												
	Dwelling No.	Family No.	Name	Sex	Color	Occupation	Real Estate	Personal Estate	Birthplace	Married 1	Attended	Cannot R
30												
31												
32												
33	34	34	Henry L Marsh	25	M	Merchant	8000	5000	N Y			
34			Amanda E "	20	F				"			
35	35	35	John L Marsh	54	M	Farmer	20,000	10,000	"			
36			Elizabeth G "	39	F				"			
37			Elizabeth Aoyes	9	"				Conn			
38			Gertrude Knapp	20	"				"			
39			Mary Single in	18	"	Domestic			Ill			

Why Did the Marsh's Come to Fairbury from Washington?

It is unknown why John Marsh moved his family from Washington to Fairbury in the Fall of 1861. It appears that John L. Marsh was a successful businessman and community leader in Washington. Fairbury was founded in 1857 when the TP&W railroad extended its railroad from Peoria to Indiana. The new town of Fairbury probably offered a great business opportunity for real estate. Farm land adjacent to the original city limits could be profitably converted to building lots for the growing town. This great opportunity is probably what attracted John and his son Henry to Fairbury.

Most Accurate Account of the Marsh's Finding Coal in Fairbury

One of the most accurate accounts of how the Marsh's discovered coal in Fairbury comes from the Intelligencer newspaper in Fairbury. This would have been the newspaper with the best coverage of the initial coal mines done by John and Henry Marsh. Diane Pawlowski, Echoes Museum Board Member, graciously gave me a copy of an April 3, 1958 Blade reprint of a August 10, 1865 Intelligencer article. This is the only article related to coal mining available from the Intelligencer newspaper. The article is reprinted below:

This growing town in which we have located and where we propose in the future to publish the Intelligencer, is situated on the T.P. & W. R.R., twelve miles east of the junction with the Chicago, Alton-St. Louis R.R. The original town plot was laid out by Cropsey and Chanute in 1857. The first business house was opened about the 1st of January, 1858, by William Mitchell. Soon after Vanemman and Fitch erected a warehouse, and located as grain merchants. In the spring of 1858 Pogue, Amsbary and Thomas opened up a dry goods store in the building now occupied by Jones & Amsbary. During the year improvements went on rapidly. The Morris House and two boarding houses were erected; Patton & Dodds opened a grocery store, the depot was located and building erected by subscriptions from the citizens of the town and vicinity; a lumber yard was established by John Coomer; a drug store by John Blackburn; a wagon making and repairing shop by Smith & Hall; and a blacksmith shop by Jacob Hunt. A Methodist church edifice was erected during the same year. In 1859 a business house was opened by Remington & Gillett in the building now occupied by J.P. and W.S. McDowell. The flouring mill now owned and run so successfully by R.B. Wilson, was erected by W.G. McDowell, and many other smaller improvements were made.

In 1860, Pogue and Co. erected the large warehouse now run with such an advantage to the farming community by Dresser & Co. and a fine two-story school house sufficient to accommodate over two hundred scholars with four teachers, was erected. In 1861 another store was opened by Strevell & Oliver, in the building now occupied by H. Remington. Hulsey, Fulton & Co. opened a new drug store, and a Presbyterian church was built. Thus, year after year has our town improved in business houses with proportionate growth in residence, until we now number five dry goods stores, one clothing store, with a fine stock of boots and shoes; four grocery stores, three hardware stores; two furniture stores and all other branches of business proportionately represented. The amount of capital invested is perhaps larger for the size of the place than is to be found in any other town in this portion of the state. Businessmen do business upon their own capital, mainly; and do a safe as well as an extensive business. The bank of McDowell, Lyman & Co. is a valuable institution for our town while it, no doubt, yields a fine income to the firm. Through this bank exchange can be had for doing business in any direction

and the unquestioned integrity of the several members of the firm is a guarantee to those who find it convenient to do business with them.

An important feature of our prosperity remains to be noticed. We refer to the great supply of coal, not only for ourselves but for our neighbors who in the winter at least are quite dependent upon us. In 1859, Mr. John L. Marsh & Co. bored for coal just west of the town and being successful in finding a workable vein of coal, a shaft was immediately sunk. At a little over two hundred feet from the surface, a vein four feet and ten inches thick, was struck, and the coal found to be of a superior quality.

The town plot has been growing, with the growth of business and the demand for more room. In 1859, John L. Marsh laid out an addition of 80 acres on the west. In 1863, Caleb Patton laid out an addition on the south. In 1864 A.L. Pogue extended the town plot still farther south and recently I.P. McDowell has laid out an addition on the Northeast, and John Atkins on the South east. Over 300 acres are laid out in town lots and still the cry is for more room, and A.P. Straight, we learn, is about to yield of his farm lying on the southwest. We congratulate those who own land anywhere near to Fairbury. They can soon sell off in town lots.

The morals of the people are well cared for, and those who prefer good, moral society can have it, while we are sorry to say, there is a chance for the accommodation of those whose preference are otherwise. There are four organized religious societies in the place. The Methodist church with Rev. J.G. Evans as pastor, has, we learn, a membership of 150 or upwards, and a large congregation. Their Sunday school, N.E. Lyman, Superintendent, is said to be the finest in the county, having over 200 scholars, and being conducted with ability, and so as to make it interesting to all. The Presbyterian pulpit, if filled by Rev. W.T. Hempstead, a man of education and possessing quite a poetical gift. The Baptist society are erecting a church which they hope to complete soon though they are not without any regular pastor, but have fortunately secured the services of Rev. Mr. Karnes for a short time while they are struggling to finish their house of worship. The Christian (Campbellite) society have for the present the service of H. Spence as pastor. Those wishing to attend Divisional Services have an opportunity of doing so where pulpits are ably filled. But while the churches have been making laudable efforts to moralize the community, there have been here, and still are, influences at work to corrupt the youth, and paralyze the efforts of the good. That bane of human of society, the drinking saloon, has done its mischief here as well as elsewhere. We trust that the day is not far removed when these shall be completely routed out of our pleasant little town. Drinking saloons, even though they pass under the name of "beer saloons", will make drunkards. We bid God speed to the noble band of templars here who are battling the evil of intemperance in all of its hideous forms. We shall hereafter have some thing to say about some needed improvements.

1878 History Book Account of Finding Coal in Fairbury

The book, *The History of Livingston County*, was written in 1878, almost 20 years after the Marsh's discovery of coal in Fairbury. Below is the excerpt from the 1878 book about the Marsh's finding coal in Fairbury:

The geological formations are not unlike those common to the Grand Prairie district, with the important difference that, in this county, coal and stone are found in abundance.

For some years after the first settlement, and during the second epoch, the people lived in ignorance of the vast coal fields of the county. All residents then lived in or upon the skirts of the timber, and no fuel was needed, other than the forest supplied. It is true that the outcroppings of coal along the banks of the river, in the northwestern part of the county, were discovered and commented upon; but the pioneer had no means of utilizing it, and considered it of no value.

About the year 1860, Henry L. Marsh, who owned a large tract of land near Fairbury, had his attention called to the fact that the rapidly increasing population must necessarily require a more abundant supply and a cheaper fuel. There was not timber enough in the county to supply it for ten years, at the rate it was being consumed: and, from his knowledge of coal formation, Marsh believed that it could here be obtained, by going to a sufficient depth.

At that day, coal mining, by deep, perpendicular shafts, was unknown in this bituminous district. La Salle, Peoria and Morris "were sending out the few tons they 'were called upon to supply, and Coalville supplied a meager local trade.

The Wilmington coal fields were not yet discovered, and Streator, which now, from its various shafts, sends up its thousands of tons per day, was unknown to the "worthy man whose name it bears; and for a decade after Marsh's pioneer labors, the place was known only by the name of "Hardscrabble."

To a man of less force, will-power and energy than Marsh, the idea of mining coal on the open prairie of Livingston County would have remained an idea, or might have grown into a desire, but he was made of the right material to push a gigantic enterprise to completion. He at once set about an investigation of the facts in the case, and, under his investigation, the possibilities steadily grew into a reality. The story of his struggles with adverse fortune, his heavy losses, his trials and failures, and his final success, would make an interesting and instructive chapter of history.

Water, at various depths, so flooded his work and damaged it in various ways. that his friends and backers deemed the scheme impracticable; but he was not discouraged, and, in the last extremity, he completed an invention of his own, by which the difficulty was overcome. At a depth of 180 feet, he struck a paying vein of excellent coal. The success attending Marsh's efforts incited others to like enterprises, and, in 1865, a shaft was sunk at Pontiac, another shaft at Fairbury in 1868, one near Streator in 1872, one at Cornell in 1875, and one at Cayuga in 1878.

Cayuga, which is distant five miles from the river, is, thus far, the farthest point from the Vermilion at which a paying vein of coal has been reached in the county. The efforts to find coal at Odell and Dwight have thus far proved failures. The mining at Coalville is carried on by horizontal entries, and is not so expensive to the operators. The capital invested in coal mining in Livingston will not fall short of a quarter of a million dollars, and, thus far, the enterprise has proved far more profitable to purchasers than to the proprietors of the mines.

Ledges of limestone, suitable for building purposes, are found along the banks of the Vermilion; and at Pontiac and in the vicinity, inexhaustible quarries of calcareo-silicious stone are found. In

sinking the coal shafts at Fairbury, a fine dark sandstone of peculiar color and quality was discovered. This stone is easily dressed, and is a superior stone for building purposes."

Coal Mining Knowledge

What makes the Marsh's discovery of coal in Fairbury so fascinating, is that the common thought at that time was coal was only found on the banks of rivers in Illinois. People probably thought the Marsh's were crazy to waste money trying to dig down 180 feet to find coal below the Illinois prairie.

In 1860, John Marsh was 55 years old and his son Henry was 26 years old.

One interesting part of this 1878 history book story is the statement that Henry Marsh had a prior knowledge of coal mining before he tried to find coal in Fairbury. It is unknown how either John or Henry Marsh had this previous knowledge. They originally came from central New York state, which is next door to the coal fields of Pennsylvania. Maybe they had relatives who were in the coal mining industry in Pennsylvania.

On August 18, 1928, the Pantagraph ran a story about Marsh Park in Fairbury. This story includes a reference to the Marsh's discovering coal in Fairbury.

satisfactory.

other stock in proportion. As many the center of town.

Park Playground Is One of Fairbury's Beauty Spots



Staff Photo.

Marsh Park at Fairbury, One of the Community's Beauty Spots.

(Special to The Daily Pantograph.)

FAIRBURY, Aug. 17.—Marsh park is being put to good use as a playground. The park was donated John L. Marsh, one of the early settlers of Fairbury. He came to Fairbury from Washington, Ill., in 1861, bought several hundred acres of land and laid out an addition to the town called Marsh's addition. At that time all of the town lay west of Third street.

Many trees were set out in the park by Mr. Marsh and he had hoped the town would center around this plot. However for many years the town made no attempt to main-

tain the park and Mr. Marsh used it as a pasture. About 25 years ago the city built a bandstand there and later purchased playground equipment, swings, teeters, and slides. Women's clubs of the town cooperated and built a drinking fountain there about 15 years ago. Later the women sponsored laying out of tennis courts.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Powell have given net and backstops for a new tennis court to be built on the east side. A sand pile is another late acquisition. An outdoor oven, donated by the Fairbury Woman's club, was installed Wednesday. Funds for this oven and installation

were obtained from conducting a stand on concert nights. Cooperation was given by the young ladies who use the tennis courts.

Mr. Marsh was somewhat of a geologist and believed coal was underground at Fairbury. After having his belief verified by a practical geologist, he sunk the first coal shaft near Fairbury, one and one-half miles west of town in 1861. The home of Mr. Marsh is still standing just west of the park and is now owned by Jacob Kaiser. Mrs. Remington of Fairbury is a step-daughter of Mr. Marsh. Mrs. Alene Heckman, wife of the Fairbury mayor is a step-daughter.

In this story, it says, "Mr. Marsh [John L. Marsh] was somewhat of a geologist and believed coal was underground at Fairbury. After having his belief verified by a practical geologist, he sunk the first coal shaft near Fairbury..." So maybe John L. Marsh was an amateur geologist. It is likely that father John L. Marsh provided the financing and geological knowledge, while son Henry provided his youthful energy to the coal mining projects.

1885 Obituary for John L. Marsh

On a timeline basis, the next account of the Marsh's finding coal in Fairbury, comes from the 1885 obituary for John L. Marsh in the Blade. The April 2, 1885, Blade newspaper carried the obituary of John L. Marsh. A portion of the obituary recounts how John and his son Henry first found coal in Fairbury:

Beyond the Divide.

DIED.—At his residence in this city, 4 p. m., Saturday, March 21, 1886, of senile rheumatism, JOHN L. MARSH, aged 79 years, 5 months.

Again the dark angel, in whose train come sorrow and grief and mourning, has hovered over our midst, and our city deploras the loss of one of its most estimable citizens. The death summons of Mr. Marsh was sudden and unexpected, and those who saw him on our streets but a few hours before death, and rejoiced at his returning health and strength in his declining years, were shocked to learn that in a few hours after, his spirit was wafted to the bright beyond. His death was peaceful, and he retained his mental faculties to the end. John L. Marsh was born at Bridgewater, Oneida county, New York, Oct. 21, 1806. His early life was spent principally on the farm, although he devoted several years in teaching school. In 1831, he was married at Bridgewater, to Miss Caroline E. Benham. By this union, two children were born—Henry L., and John Frederick, the latter dying in infancy. With his family, Mr. Marsh moved to Tremont, Tazewell county, Ill., in 1837, where he engaged in farming. In 1840, he moved to Washington, Ill., and embarked in the general merchandise business. Remaining there until 1844, he moved to Kenosha, Wis., where he engaged in the same vocation. In 1847 he moved to Chicago, and opened a commission house, dealing principally in salt and wool. He returned to Washington in 1853, where he engaged in farming, although taking no active part himself. His wife died in 1856, during their residence there. He was remarried in 1859 at New York City, to Mrs. Elizabeth G. Noyes. With his family, he settled in Fairbury in the fall of 1861. In the spring of 1862, he with his son, Henry L., commenced operations in sinking the west shaft (now abandoned) from which the first coal was raised April 14, 1863. It is well to state here that this shaft is said to be the pioneer mine sunk on the open prairie in this state. Mr. Marsh was prominently identified with the business interests of Fairbury, until the last few years. He was also instrumental in the building up of the western portion of our village for which he deserved great praise. He was a shrewd business man, noted for his many sterling qualities, and worthy of the esteem confided in him. His death is sorely regretted. His remains conveyed to Washington, Ill., Tuesday, March 21st, where they were placed by the side of his first wife in the family burial-ground. The funeral services will be held at the Presbyterian church next Sunday, April 5th, at the usual church hour, Rev. Walt conducting the services.

John's obituary is re-typed below:

Beyond the Divide

DIED. - At his residence in this city, 4 p.m., Saturday, March 24, 1886, of illegible rheumatism, John L. Marsh, aged 79 years, 5 months.

Again the dark angel, in whose train come sorrow and grief and mourning, has hovered over our midst, and our city, deplores the loss of one of its most estimable citizens. The death summons of Mr. Marsh was sudden and unexpected, and those who saw him on our streets but a few hours before his death, and rejoiced at his returning health and strength in his declining years, were shocked to learn that in a few hours after, his spirit was wafted to the bright beyond. His death was peaceful, and he retained his mental faculties to the end.

John L. Marsh was born at Bridgewater, Oneida county, New York, Oct. 21, 1805. His early life was spent principally on the farm, although he devoted several years in teaching school. In 1831, he was married to Miss Caroline E. Benham. By this union, two children were born -- Henry L. and John Frederick, the latter dying in infancy. With his family, Mr. Marsh moved to Tremont, Tazewell county, Ill., in 1837, where he engaged in farming. In 1840, he moved to Washington, Ill., and embarked in the general merchandise business. Remaining there until 1844, he moved to Kenosha, Wis., where he engaged in the same vocation. In 1847, he moved to Chicago, and opened a commission house, dealing principally in salt and wool. He returned to Washington in 1853, where he engaged in farming, although taking no active role part himself. His wife died in 1856, during their residence there. He was remarried in 1859 at New York City, to Mrs. Elizabeth G. Noyes.

With his family, he settled in Fairbury in the fall of 1861. In the spring of 1862, he, with his son, Henry L., commenced operations in sinking the west shaft (now abandoned) from which the first coal was raised April 14, 1863. It is well to state here that this shaft is said to be the pioneer mine sunk on the open prairie in this state.

Mr. Marsh was prominently identified with the business interests of Fairbury, until the last few years. He was also instrumental in the building up of the western portion of our village for which he deserved great praise. He was a shrewd business man, noted for his many sterling qualities and worth of the esteem confided in him. His death is sorely regretted. His remains conveyed to Washington, Ill., Tuesday, March 24th, where they were placed by the side of his first wife in the family burial ground. The funeral services will be held at the Presbyterian church next Sunday, April 5th, at the usual church hour, Rev. Watt conducting the services.

The 1878 Livingston County history book only credits Henry L. Marsh for the first discovery of coal in Fairbury. The obituary of John L. Marsh credits both father and son for this discovery.

1909 Livingston County History Book

The next history book with a reference to finding coal at Fairbury was the 1909 Livingston County history book. This book was published almost 50 years after this initial coal discovery in Fairbury. It was also published about 25 years after both John and Henry Marsh had died (John in 1885 and Henry in 1886). The coal mining discovery story from the 1909 history book is below:

"The geological formations are not unlike those common to the central portion of the state with the important difference that in this county, coal and stone are found in abundance, although the earlier settlers were in ignorance of the fact. In the earlier days the residents lived in or adjacent to the timber, and no fuel was needed other than the forest supplied.

In the latter '50s coal was discovered cropping out of the ground in Reading Township. The coal was gotten out of the ground by the owner of the land, and it was sold at \$1.00 a load—big or little.

The county was beginning to be rapidly populated in the early '60s, two railroads passing through it, and it was self-evident that there would not be enough timber left in the county at the rate it was being consumed.

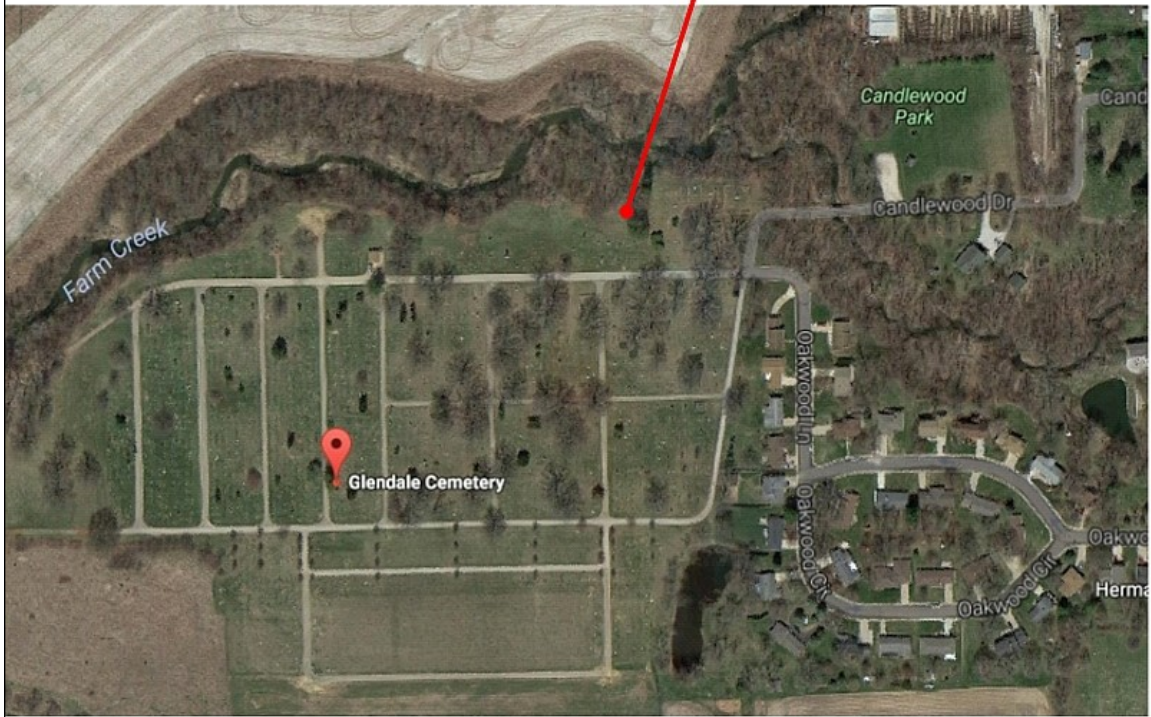
In 1862, Henry L. Marsh, of Fairbury, began the sinking of a shaft on his tract of land, a mile west of Fairbury. After three attempts, a five-foot vein of coal was struck in 1863 at a depth of 180 feet. A few years later, two more shafts were sunk in that village and also one at Pontiac. Shafts were also sunk at Forrest, Chatsworth, Odell, Cayuga and Dwight, but they proved failures. There are mines now in operation at Pontiac, Fairbury, Cardiff, Cornell, Coalville, and in Reading Township, south of Streator, from which thousands of tons of coal are being taken out daily. The total output of Livingston County mines, in 1907, was 269,811 tons.

Ledges of limestone, suitable for building purposes, are found on Indian Creek, southwest of Fairbury, and in some parts along the banks of the Vermilion river. In the vicinity of Pontiac, calcareo-siliceous stone is found. In sinking the mine at Fairbury, a dark sandstone of peculiar color was found. The front of one building in that city was built with it, but it did not withstand the storms. Sand and gravel can be found in abundance in a major portion of the townships."

Three Marsh Family Grave Stones in Washington, Illinois, Cemetery

The author visited the Glenwood Cemetery in Washington, Illinois and found the three Marsh family grave stones.

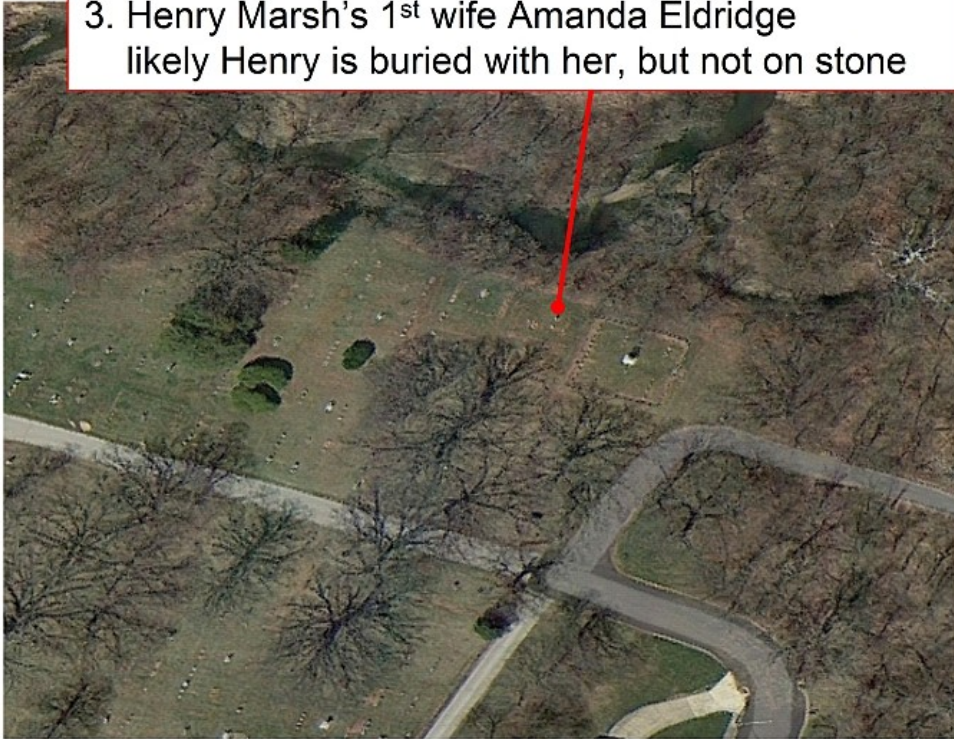
(3) Marsh Family Graves



Washington, Illinois, Glenwood "new" Cemetery

Marsh Family Graves

1. John Marsh's 1st wife Caroline Benham
2. John & Caroline's infant son John Frederick
3. Henry Marsh's 1st wife Amanda Eldridge
likely Henry is buried with her, but not on stone



Northeast Corner of Washington, Illinois,
Glenwood "new" Cemetery

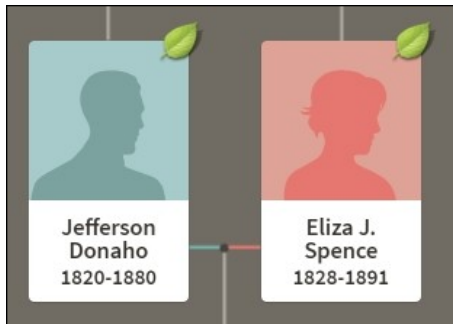
John and Henry Marsh after the Coal Discovery in 1862

In 1863, when the first coal was found in their mine a mile west of Fairbury, John and his second wife Elizabeth G. Waterbury were living in Fairbury.

Henry L. Marsh and his wife Amanda Eldridge were living in Fairbury when the first coal was mined with their two year old son John L. Marsh. In 1864, their daughter Caroline was born.

In 1865, Henry's wife Amanda Eldridge, age 26, died. She was buried close to John L. Marsh's first wife, Caroline Benham, in the Washington Cemetery. She has her own tomb stone.

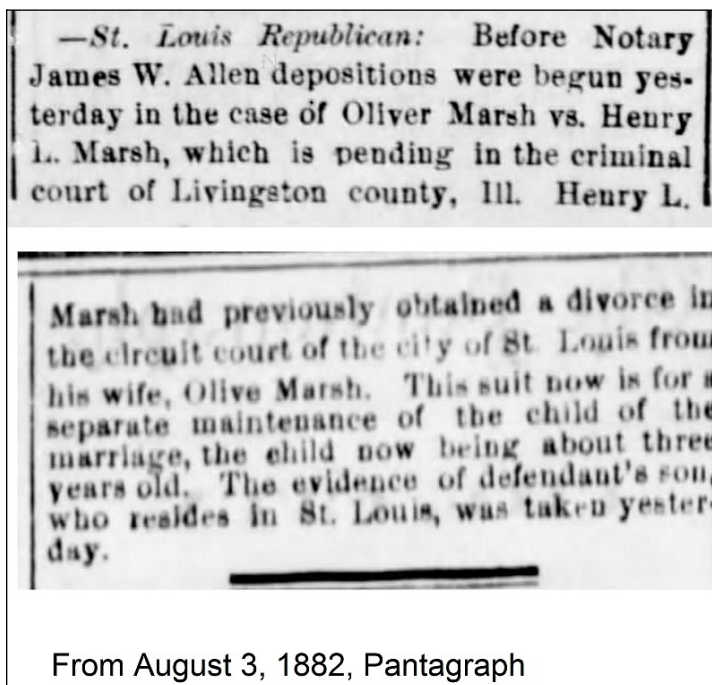
Henry L. Marsh married his second wife, Olive M. Donahue, in 1878. Olive was from Fairbury and her mother was a Spence, one of the founding families of the Fairbury area:



Divorce of Henry Marsh and Olive Donaho

When Henry and Olive got married in 1878, Henry was 44 and Olive was 21 years of age. In 1882, they got divorced. Henry was 48 and Olive was 25 years of age when they got divorced.

According to a August 3, 1882, Pantagraph story, Olive sued Henry for child support.



Henry did not marry after divorcing Olive. She did get remarried, and ended up being buried in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Final Resting Places for the Marsh Family

The author visited the Washington Cemetery. Three different tomb stones were found for the Marsh family. John and his first wife's infant son has one stone. John's first wife has her own stone. Henry's first wife has the third stone.

Using the Internet, the tombstone for Henry's second wife, Olive Donaho, was found in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

At this point in the research, it was unknown where John L. Marsh, his second wife, and his son Henry are buried. The author consulted with the City Clerk of Washington, Illinois, who administers the cemetery. The first set of the City Clerk's records are shown below:

GLENDALE CEMETERY		
Dates in parenthesis with a "+" after it are from cemetery records. Most were		
MARSH,		MARTIN
Amanda ELDRIDGE - w/o Henry L. - d. Mar. 29, 1865 @ 26 yrs.		Berna
"Erected Mar. 29, 1868." (Tall obelisk, broken in 3 pieces).		Eva
	1-2-1	
Caroline - w/o John L. - d. Nov. 27, 1856 @ 46-7-19.	1-2-2	
John Frederick - s/o J. L. & C. - d. July 14, 1842 @ 1-2-15.		Brya
	1-2-3	

This set of records matches the author's on-site observation of three different tomb stones.

The City Clerk then found a 2nd set of cemetery records on index cards. They are shown below:

Lot 2

1	2	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MARSH, JOHN FREDERICK (infant son)

Block 1 Lot 2 Grave 3

Lot 2

1	2	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MARSH, CAROLINE

Block 1 Lot 2 Grave 2

Lot 2

1	2	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MARSH, H. L.

Block 1 Lot 2 Grave 1

This 2nd set of records indicate that Henry L. Marsh, was buried beside his first wife. Her tomb stone was never updated to show that Henry is buried with her. This is verified by the following Washington newspaper story published when Henry died:

—The remains of Mr. Henry Marsh, who died in Fairbury, Sunday night last, were brought here Tuesday afternoon and interred in the new cemetery. He was well known in this vicinity, the family having lived here many years before their removal to Fairbury. During their residence here they occupied and we believe owned the site where Mr. Denhart's fine residence now stands. The original family consisted of only three members—father, mother and son, all three of whom are now resting from their labors in Washington's beautiful cemetery. The son after leaving Washington was married and he leaves a son and daughter to mourn his loss.—*Washington News.*

The Fairbury Blade ran the Washington News obituary in their May 7, 1886 edition.

At this point in the research, the only unknown grave locations were for John Marsh and his second wife. Then the author found John Marsh's obituary in The Blade. His obituary indicates he was buried beside his first wife in the Washington Cemetery.

At this point, the burial locations for John, Henry, and their two wives were all identified, and they are noted above.

John L. Marsh Donation of Land for Marsh Park

A copy of the original land deeds granting Marsh Park to the City of Fairbury was graciously provided by the City of Fairbury City Hall personnel. The five pages in this document are shown below:

1859

ABSTRACT OF TITLE

TO

Marsh Addition To
Fairbury
Livingston Square &
Water tower area

In Livingston County, Illinois

Ordered by

Title in

TERMS STRICTLY CASH

Amount - - \$

Date of Certificate

..... M

No. Book Page

Livingston County Abstract Co.

(Incorporated)

E. HOOBLER, President and Manager

Late Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Livingston County

Pontiac, Illinois

South Side Square. Local and Long Distance Phones

Conveyancing and Abstracts of Title to all Lands
and Lots in Livingston County made on short notice.

Loans made on Real Estate Security at lowest
rates of interest.

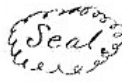
Leader Print  Pontiac, Illinois

Copy of deed
from J. L. Marsh
for Streets alleys
and Public Squares

"Copy"

Know all men by these presents that I,
John L. Marsh of the County of Tazewell and
State of Illinois do hereby acknowledge that
the addition to the town of Fairbury in Livingston
County and State of Illinois was surveyed
according to my directions on the South
West quarter of Section three (3) Township
No. 26, twenty six, North of Range six (6) East
into Lots Blocks and Alley's as shown by the
plat of said addition made by Nelson
Pucke, County Surveyor, and that I do
hereby donate the streets and alley's and the
"Public Square" to the public use forever.
Reserving however twenty feet wide on
Locust, North of and adjoining Blocks
seventeen (17) and eighteen (18) and thirty one (31)

Pontiac, Aug. 9th 1859.

Signed John L. Marsh, 

Plat of Marsh's
Addition
to
Fairbury.

Plat entitled as in the margin
dated July 20, 1859.
Recorded August 9, 1859 in
Subdivision Record 1 page 55.
Nelson Buck, County Surveyor,

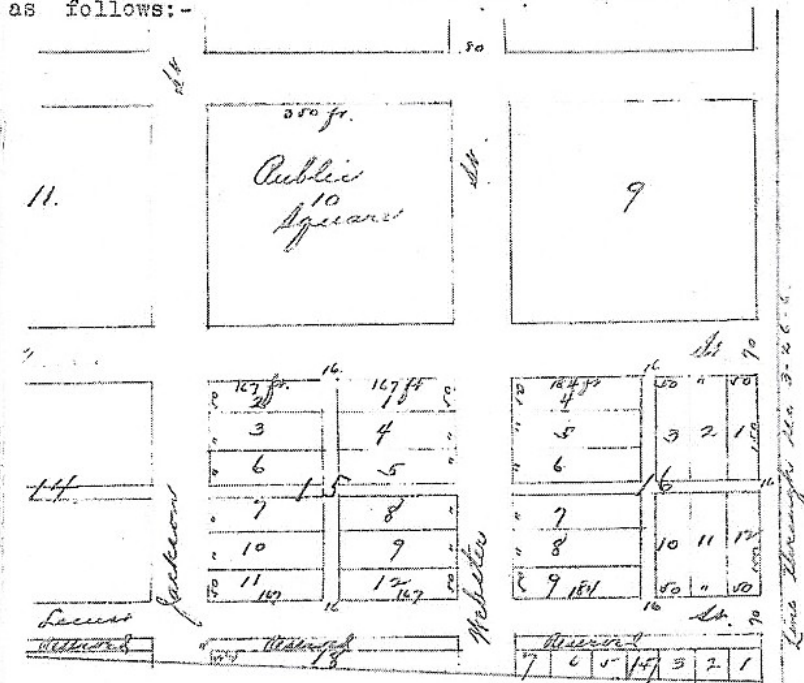
certifies on July 20, 1859, that he has surveyed for John L. Marsh a part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3, Twp. 26 N., R. 6 E. of the 3rd P.M. in Livingston Co., Ill. about 101.31 acres, and subdivided the same into Block, Lots, Streets and Alleys and Public Grounds. The width of the Lots and Blocks, and the width of the Streets are as marked on the map, the large figures near the center of the lots indicate their number. A stone is planted at the quarter section corner between Sections 3 and 11, 25 feet East of the SE corner of Block 27.

Appended is a certificate signed by John L. Marsh, acknowledged before E.W. Gray, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Livingston Co., Ill.

He certifies that the Addition to the Town of Fairbury, was surveyed according to his direction in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3, Twp. 26 N., R. 6 E. of the 3rd P.M. as shown by the plat of said Addition made by Nelson Buck, County Surveyor, " and I hereby donate the streets and alleys and the public square to the public use forever.

Reserving however 30 feet wide on Locust Street North of adjoining Blocks 17, 18 and 31.

Blocks Fifteen (15) and Sixteen (16) are shown on said plat as follows:-



John L. Marsh &
Elizabeth G., his wife,
to
The Town of Fairbury, in
said County of Livingston
& State of Illinois.

Warranty Deed.
Dated March 31, 1868.
Recorded April 1, 1868 in
Book 39 page 80.
Consideration \$1.00.

Witnesseth, That the said party
of the first part, for and in

consideration of the sum of \$1.00 in hand paid, by the said party
of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged,
has Granted, Bargained and Sold and by these presents do Grant,
Bargain and Sell unto the said party of the second part,
heirs and assigns, all the following described lot, piece or parcel
of land, situated in the Town of Fairbury, in the County of
Livingston and State of Illinois, to-wit:- Lot Seven (7) Eight (8)
Nine (9), Ten (10) Eleven (11), Twelve (12) in Block Sixteen (16)
Also Lots Eight (8), Nine (9) and Twelve (12) in Block Fifteen (15)
Also Seventeen (17) feet off the East end of Lots Seven (7), Ten
(10) and Eleven (11) in Block Fifteen (15), all in Marsh's Addition
to the Town of Fairbury, upon the express condition that said land
shall be kept for the use of said town, as public grounds forever
open, free and unobstructed by buildings or otherwise.

State of Illinois)
:ss.
Livingston County)

We hereby certify that the above
and foregoing is a correct Abstract of the Plat of Marsh's
Addition to Fairbury, and of Deed recorded in Book 39 of Deeds,
at page 80.

Dated at Pontiac, Ill. this 21st day of July, A.D. 1917, at
8 o'clock A.M.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY ABSTRACT COMPANY.

By E. Woodley President.
Abstracter.

Henry L. Marsh Last Will & Testament

In 1886, Henry L. Marsh died at age 52. His father, John L. Marsh, passed away just a year earlier at age 80.

Henry was survived by his father's second wife, Elizabeth Waterbury Marsh.

He was also survived by the two children he had with his first wife, Amanda Eldridge. These two children were John L. Marsh and Caroline Marsh Fleming.

Henry was also survived by his divorced second wife, Olive Donaho, and their daughter Chloe (Cleo) Marsh.

The original hand-written will of Henry L. Marsh is shown below:

RECORD OF THE LAST WILL AND

Other Page, Page 2 of 2, Backwater, Chicago

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

ss. In the Livingston County Court. In Probate, April Term, A. D. 1886

On Wednesday the 30 day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty six

PRESENT: The Hon. R. R. Wallace Judge.
Chas. Stark Clerk And J. P. McArthur Sheriff.

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF

Henry L. Moarsch DECEASED. This day comes John L. Moarsch and makes due proof to the satisfaction of the Court of the death of the said Henry L. Moarsch late of said County of Livingston which proof is ordered by the Court to be entered of record. Thereupon comes John L. Moarsch and surrenders to the Court an instrument of writing purporting to be the last will and testament of the said Henry L. Moarsch deceased, which is ordered by the Court to be filed. Subsequently, also come J. P. McArthur and A. B. Remington subscribing witnesses to the aforesaid instrument of writing, and, being first duly sworn, testify to the due execution of said instrument by the said Henry L. Moarsch deceased, and their attestation thereof according to law, on the day of the date thereof, as and for the last will and testament of the said Henry L. Moarsch deceased, and that at the time of the execution of said instrument, said witnesses believed said testator to be of sound mind and memory and under no constraint, which testimony is ordered by the Court to be entered of record in full. And also come James H. Moore named as Exceut in said will, and take and subscribe the oath required by the statute in such case made and provided, which oath is ordered by the Court to be entered of record. And the Court being fully advised in the premises, it is ordered that the said instrument be and the same is hereby declared to be duly and sufficiently proven and authenticated as the true last will and testament of the said Henry L. Moarsch deceased. And it is further ordered by the Court that the said will be entered of record.

R. R. Wallace
County Judge of Livingston County.

THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,

PROOF OF DEATH.

ss. John L. Moarsch being duly sworn, deponeth and saith that Henry L. Moarsch late of the Town of Fairbury in the County of Livingston and State aforesaid, departed this life at Fairbury in said County, on or about the 26 day of April A. D. 1886, and that he died leaving his last will and testament, to the best of his knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, by said John L. Moarsch this 30 day of April A. D. 1886.

EXDORSED: Filed April 30 A. D. 1886 Chas. Stark J. P. McArthur CLERK.

A true record of the original proof of death and endorsements.

ATTEST: Chas. Stark CLERK.

STATE OF ILLINOIS,

PROOF OF WILL.

ss. In the County Court of said County. In Probate, April Term, A. D. 1886

Personally appeared in open Court John L. Moarsch and J. P. McArthur subscribing witnesses to the annexed instrument of writing, purporting to be the last will and testament of Henry L. Moarsch late of said County, deceased, who, being duly sworn according to law, do depose and say, each for himself, that they were present and saw the said Henry L. Moarsch sign said will in their presence; that said witnesses thus attested said will in the presence of said testator, and at his request.

and that they believe that the said testator was of sound mind and memory, of lawful age, and under no constraint when he signed said will.

Subscribed and sworn to by said witnesses, in open Court, this 30 day of April A. D. 1886

J. P. McArthur
A. B. Remington

EXDORSED: Filed April 30 A. D. 1886 Chas. Stark CLERK.

A true record of the original proof of will and endorsement.

Attest: Chas. Stark CLERK.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF Henry L. Moarsch

DECEASED.

I, Henry L. Moarsch of Fairbury Livingston County & State of Illinois being of sound mind & memory and lawful age, do make & declare this to be my last will & testament.

First, I direct that my funeral expenses and all my just debts be fully paid.

Second I direct that my Executor at once execute a quit claims deed of Lot No. Eight (8) Block No. seven (7) Moarsch's addition to Fairbury to Elizabeth G. Moarsch.

Third, I direct my executor to at once execute a quit claims deed to Lot nine (9) Block seven (7) Moarsch's addition to Fairbury to Foggie G. Remington.

Fourth, I direct that my Executor within thirty days or as soon as possible within that time raise the sum of three Hundred Dollars (\$300.-) and pay the same to my divorced wife Olivia Moarsch.

And fourth to be void providing before my death I pay the amount.

any part of it leave receipt therefor among my papers.
I get I direct my executor at the same time they pay the above three
hundred Dollars to my divorced wife, Oliver bears to pay Lewis addition
there to the sum of five Dollars in trust to be paid by her to her daughter
Oliver bears when the said Oliver bears becomes of age.

5th. I direct my executors to deposit the sum of five Dollars within one hundred days from my death, in some Bank in the County of Livingston State of Illinois to be paid by said Bank together with the interest on the same to the said Rebecca Clark at her maturity also to deposit five Dollars in the County Court of Livingston said Illinois under the same condition for the same purpose. I hereby authorize & empower my said Co executors & in case of the death of either of them then the survivor to sell & convey by good & sufficient Warranty Deeds or Deeds any or all my Real Estate or any interest I may have in any Real Estate by Mortgage or otherwise & to foreclose any mortgage or trust Deed or Contract in regard to Real Estate ~~in any or all Real Estate~~ in which I may be interested or they may see fit in their discretion to convey any interest I may have in any real Estate by Mortgage or deed of Trust for the purpose of raising money to pay any of my debts or either of the above specific sums mentioned or for any other purpose they see fit & such Deeds or Deeds of Trust shall convey all the interest I or any heirs have or had in said Real Estate.

Eighthly. I give devise bequeath all the remainder of my estate both Real & personal, to my son John T. Marsh my Daughter Carrie Marsh Fleming three fifths ($\frac{3}{5}$) of all to go to my son John T. Marsh & two fifths ($\frac{2}{5}$) to my Daughter Carrie Marsh Fleming.

Fourth, In case of the death of either John L. Albroth or Carrie Albroth Fleming without issue, then all to go to the survivor in case either should die leaving issue then that, over then to go to the child or children of the survivor. In the I hereby constitutionally appoint my son John L. Albroth my daughter Carrie Albroth Fleming Executors of this will and direct that said child or children shall not be required by this County Court. If I die without issue in case of the death of one of the above appointees above, either my act shall act. In case the appointed executor or executors die, either my act simply & do all that I do here above and over as is so, by obtaining the written acknowledgment & consent of the other.

I do witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 15th day of April A.D. 1886.

Henry L. Albroth

The name of the said Henry T. Hays was in our presence signed to the foregoing will, by the said Henry T. Hays, seen by his request have signed our names hereto as witnesses thereto.

A. B. Remington
J. P. Little

OATH OF ~~EXECUTOR~~. Administrator with the will annexed

STATE OF ILLINOIS, } ss.
Lincoln COUNTY, }

ESTATE OF Henry T. Marsh DECEASED
In County Court, April Term, A. D. 1896.

I DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR.

the same, by paying first the debts and then the legacies mentioned therein, so far as the said goods and chattels will extend to, and as much as may come to my hands or knowledge, belonging to the estate of said deceased, and render a fair and just account of my execution thereof, when thereunto required by law, to the best of my knowledge and abilities, so help me God.

Witness my hand and seal this 5th day of Feb. 1862.

Edw. R. Birmingham

A. D. 18⁵⁶, in open Court, before me.

Alvin St. John Clerk.

ENDORSED: *Apr 30* *1886* *Alvin Stark* Clerk

Proved and admitted to record April 30 A. D. 1876,
B. B. Wallace County Judge.

A true record of the last Will and Testament of Henry L. McCarste deceased, and the endorsements thereon and the oath of Robert appended thereto.

Alvin Stark Clerk

The main body of this 1886 hand-written document was transcribed into the typed text below:

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF.....Henry L. Marsh....DECEASED

I, Henry L. Marsh of Fairbury Livingston County, State of Illinois, being of sound mind & memory do make & declare this to be my last will & testament.

First, I direct that my funeral expenses and all my just debts be fully paid.

Second, I direct that my Executor at once execute a quit claim deed of Lot No. (8) Block No. (7) Marsh addition to Fairbury to Elizabeth G. Marsh.

Third, I direct my executors to at once execute a quit claim deed to Lot nine (9) block (7) Marsh addition to Fairbury to Lizzie G. Remington.

Fourth, I direct that my Executor within ninety days or as soon as possible within that time raise the sum of three Hundred Dollars (\$300.-) and pay the same to my divorced wife Olive Marsh. [Note: \$300 in 1886 is equivalent to \$7,982 in 2015 dollars.]

Claims fourth to be paid providing before my death to pay the amount of any part of it leave receipt therefore among my papers.

Fifth, I direct my Executor at the same time they pay the above three Hundred Dollars to my divorced wife Olive Marsh to pay her in addition there to the sum of five Dollars in trust to be paid by her to her Daughter Chloe Marsh when this said Chloe Marsh becomes of age. [Note: \$5 in 1886 is equivalent to \$133 in 2015 dollars.]

Sixth, I direct my executor to deposit the sum of five Dollars within one hundred days from my death in some Bank in the County of Livingston State of Illinois to be paid by said Bank together with the interest on the same to the said Chloe Marsh at her majority also to deposit five dollars in the county court of Livingston illegible Illinois under that same conditions of the same purpose.

Seventh I hereby authorize and empower my said Executor & in case of the death of either of them then the survivor to sell & convey by good & sufficient warranty deed or deeds any or all my Real Estate or any interest I may have in any Real Estate by Mortgage or otherwise & to foreclose any mortgage or trust Deed or contract in regards to Real Estate in which I may be interested or they may in their discretion encumber any interest I may have in any real estate by mortgage or deed of trust for the purpose of raising money to pay any of my debts or either of the above specific sums mentioned or for any other purpose they see fit & such deeds or Deeds of Trust shall convey all the interest I or my heirs have or had in said Real Estate.

Eighth. I give illegible & bequeath all the remainder of my estate both real & personal to my son John L. Marsh & my daughter Carrie Marsh Fleming [Note: Caroline Marsh married Clifford B. Fleming] three fifths (3/5) of all to go to my son John L. Marsh & two fifths (2/5) to my Daughter Carrie Marsh Fleming.

Ninth, In case of the death of either John L. Marsh or Carrie Marsh Fleming without issue, Then all to go to the survivor & in case either shall die leaving issue then that ones share to go to the child or children.

Tenth, I hereby constitute and appoint my son John L. Marsh & my daughter Carrie Marsh Fleming Executors of this will and direct that they shall not be required by the illegible Court to give bond as such executor shall act. In case of the death of one of the above appointed executors

the survivor shall act. In case the appointed executor so desire, either may act singly & do all that illegible are above empowered to do by obtaining the written acknowledgement of the other.

In witness whereof I have here unto set my hand and seal this 15th day of April A.D. 1886.

Henry L. Marsh

Chicago & Paducah Railroad

According the 1878 history book, Henry L. Marsh was an investor in the Chicago and Paducah Railroad that ran from Ottawa to Fairbury.

This road now has sixty miles of track in the county. In the years 1858 and '59, the Toledo, Peoria & Warsaw road was built through the county. It was then known as the Eastern Extension of the Peoria & Oquawka R. R. The road becoming embarrassed, the Peoria & Oquawka part of it passed into the possession of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy R. R., and all the company had was an extension to a road they did not own. The company was re-organized as at present known, and pushed their road on, reaching the Mississippi at Burlington, Keokuk and Warsaw. They own eighteen miles of track in this county. Its stations are Fairbury, Forrest and Chatsworth. The road now known as the Chicago & Paducah has a local history, it being a Livingston County corporation. In 1865, Mr. Samuel L. Fleming, of Pontiac, a man who had spent a small fortune in railroading, drew, and got passed by the Legislature, a charter for a railroad from Ottawa to Fairbury. The corporators named in the charter were S. C. Ladd, B. P. Babcock, Samuel L. Fleming, Nelson Buck, Jonathan Duff, Wm. Strawn, R. B. Harrington, S. C. Crane.

Hotel, Depot, and President of Fairbury Board of Trustees

The 1878 history book says that Henry L. Marsh was one of the key builders and organizers of Fairbury.

As already stated, several additions were made to the village of Fairbury after the laying out of the original place. One of the largest of these was made by H. L. Marsh, who, it seems, has always been one of the wide-awake citizens of the town. He built a large and elegant hotel and depot in the west end of the village, which, at the time of its building (1866) cost \$17,000. But this, too, "went up" in one of the destructive fires before alluded to. Although Fairbury was laid out about the time the railroad was completed through this section, and it grew rapidly, as new railroad villages generally do, yet it was not until 1864 that it was organized under village laws and charter. At an election held on the 8th day of August, 1864, after due notice had been given, we find, upon examination of the records, that John Coomer was chosen President, and C. C. Bartlett, Clerk. At this election, there were "eighty votes given in favor of incorporation and twenty-six votes against incorporation." Whereupon it was declared that the town of Fairbury was incorporated under act of the Legislature, by more than a two-thirds vote." The first Board of Trustees elected were H. L. Marsh, E. T. Joy, I. P. McDowell, J. H. Van Eman and Delos Wright. The Board organized by electing H. L. Marsh, President, and W. G. McDowell, Clerk. John Coomer was elected Police Magistrate, but refused to qualify, and R. W. McKee was elected in his place. The village Board at present is J. F. Fraley, H. Kingman, L. B. Dominy, George Kinnear and Jesse Hanna. J. F. Fraley is President of the Board, and L. B. Dominy, Clerk. H. Kingman is Treasurer, Nathan Shepherd, Police Magistrate, and John Allum, Town Marshal.

Location and Excavation Records for H.L. Marsh Coal Mine

The 1878 history book has a page showing the different types of soil and rocks encountered when the Marsh's dug their coal mine. It also notes where the Marsh's mine was located with respect to township, range, and section number. The 2012 ISGS report used this reference to place the location of Marsh's coal mine on their map of Fairbury.

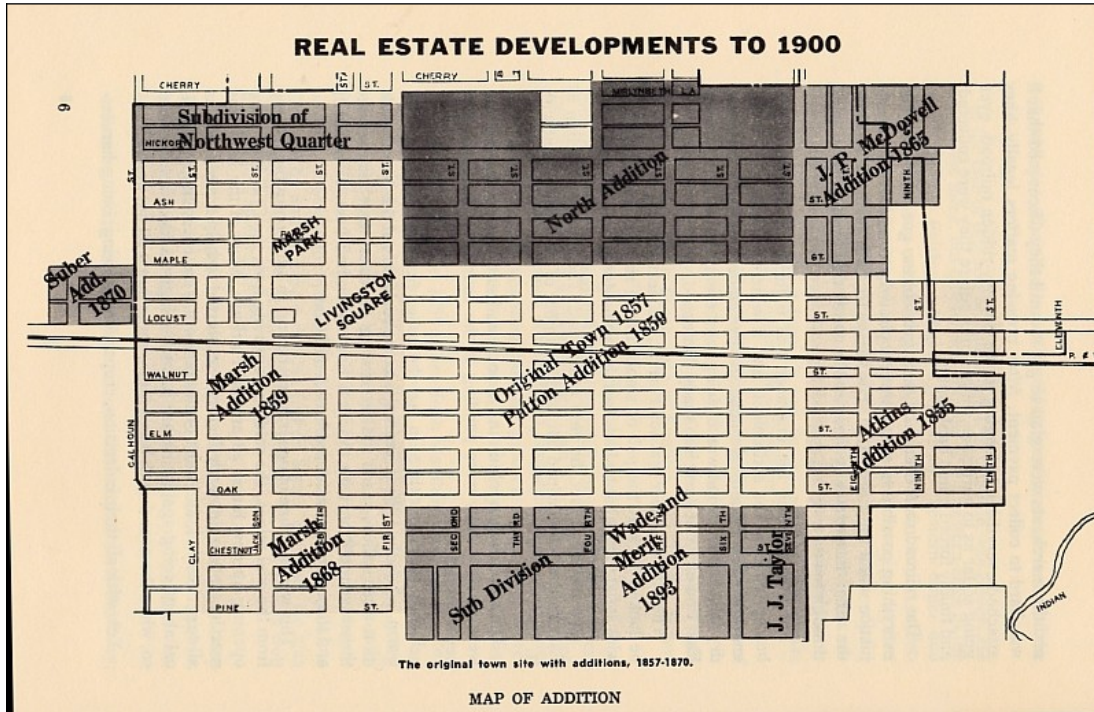
Shaft of H. L. Marsh, Fairbury, on southwest quarter of Section 4, Township 26, Range 6 east:

		Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
1.	Black soil.....	2	..	2	..
2.	Yellow clay.....	14	..	16	..
3.	{ Blue clay.....	8	..	28	..
	{ Soft blue clay.....	4	..		
4.	Quicksand.....	5	..	33	..
5.	Limestone.....	3	6	36	6
6.	{ Blue clay.....	5	10		
	{ Red and brown clay.....	5		10	10
				49	4
7.	{ Limestone.....	10	2	57	6
	{ Limestone, shale and clay.....	7	..	64	6
8.	{ Blue clay.....	5	5		
	{ Red clay.....	5	6	10	11
				75	5
9.	Limestone.....	..	4	75	9
10.	Coal, 0 3; slate, 2 ft.....	2	3	78	..
	{ Blue clay.....	5	1	83	1
11.	{ Red clay.....	5	..	88	1
	{ Red clay, very dark.....	7	3	95	4
12.	Blue limestone, very hard.....	1	2	96	6
13.	Red clay.....	8	10	105	4
	{ Sandstone, fine and light colored at top, coarser descend'g	70	..		
14.	{ Sandstone in thin bands, interstratified with thin bands				
	{ of clay.....	9	..	181	4
15.	Soapstone.....	31	8	216	..
16.	Coal.....	4	10	220	10
17.	Fire clay.....	26	8	247	6
18.	Limestone, hard.....	1	2	248	8
	{ Slate, dark.....	2	..		
	{ Slate, light.....	15	6		
19.	{ Slate, dark.....	10	8	31	8
	{ Slate, black.....	1	5	280	4
	{ Slate, band of nodules.....	..	2		
	{ Slate, black, with some coal.....	1	11		
20.	Clay, light colored, soft.....	1	11	282	3
21.	Limestone.....	6	..	288	3
22.	Soapstone, light, sandy.....	3	2	291	5
23.	Slate, dark, soft.....	..	7	292	..
24.	{ Sandy shale.....	1	5	293	5
	{ Sandy shale, changing to clay shale at bottom.....	38	7	332	..
25.	Sandstone, micaceous and shaly at top, harder at bottom.....	40	7	372	7
26.	Shale, soft at top and hard at bottom.....	8	11	381	6
27.	Coal.....	2	5	383	11
28.	Fire-clay.....	20	6	404	5
29.	Sandstone, sandy shales with thin clay bands, to.....	..	..	571	

From the coal No. 27 the section was ascertained by boring in bottom of shaft. Water was noticed at 427 feet. The upper sixteen feet of No. 25, reported to contain *calamites* and large wood-like fossils, body being of sandstone, probably *sigillaria* incrustated with coal. Limestone No. 5 of this section outcrops near town.

Marsh Park and Two Marsh Additions to Fairbury

The map in Alma Lewis James' Stuffed Club & Antimacassars book is reprinted below. It shows the location of Marsh Park, and the two different Marsh additions to the city.



Chapter 5

Coal Mining Impact on Fairbury

Fairbury was founded in 1857, when the TP&W railroad ran their new track from Peoria to Indiana. The railroad got the town started, but more was needed to cause Fairbury to grow in population.

Draining the Swamp

Most of the land around Fairbury was swampy. In fact, Fairbury was one of the last areas in the state of Illinois to be settled. Fairbury was among the last to be settled because of Fairbury's swampy ground and no access to river transportation.

The invention and usage of tiling to drain the swampy farm land caused an agricultural revolution. Suddenly Fairbury farm ground became some of the most productive farm land in the entire world. The railroad provided a way for farmers to get supplies, and provided a method to ship their grain to market. Prosperous farmers came to town to get their supplies and to ship out their goods by railroad.

Coal

Once John and Henry Marsh discovered coal in Fairbury, the news of coal mines and jobs quickly spread through the United States and Europe. For example, in 1863, a newspaper in Boston published the following article about coal being discovered in Fairbury.

Christian Watchman, Thursday, May 21, 1863, Boston, MA

In some parts of Illinois, where timber is the scarcest, deep shafts have been sunk recently, and immense beds of coal have been found. Even the geologist who have spoken with warmth of the great coal fields of that State, were not aware of their extent.

A mine just opened at Fairbury, in the centre of the grand prairie, near the Peoria and Logansport Railroad, and midway between the two branches of the Illinois Central road, is thought to be, in intrinsic value, equal to any mine of the kind in the West. The mineral wealth of the Sucker State has never been fully estimated, and I fear the benevolence of God is not felt as it ought to be by the people of Prairie land.

As a sideline note, the author had to check and see why Illinois was called the "Sucker State" back in 1863. Two possible reasons are given below.

From Chicagoist.com web site

There are two theories as to why Illinois was nicknamed the "Sucker State." One dates back to Galena's mining industry of the 1820s. The first successful lead mine in Galena opened in 1824. Word of the mines resulted thousands of people from central and southern Illinois and Missouri making their way north along the Mississippi river to Galena to search for work during the warm months. Those same people would head back south when it turned cold. These migrants

were nicknamed "suckers" after the similar patterns of the fish species in the Mississippi, according to the Illinois History Blog.

The other commonly accepted theory came from Illinois Gov. Thomas Ford. Ford wrote in his 1854 book *A History of Illinois* the term became as a term of endearment for Southern Illinoisans who came to the state looking for a new start away from the plantation system of the South. these people planted tobacco and "suckers" was a reference to the sprouts off the tobacco plants' main stems and roots, which were known to take away nutrients from the main plant. According to Ford, "These poor emigrants from the slave States were jeeringly and derisively called 'suckers,' because there were asserted to be a burthen upon the people of wealth; and when they removed to Illinois they were supposed to have stripped themselves off from the parent stem and gone away to perish like the 'sucker' of the tobacco plant."

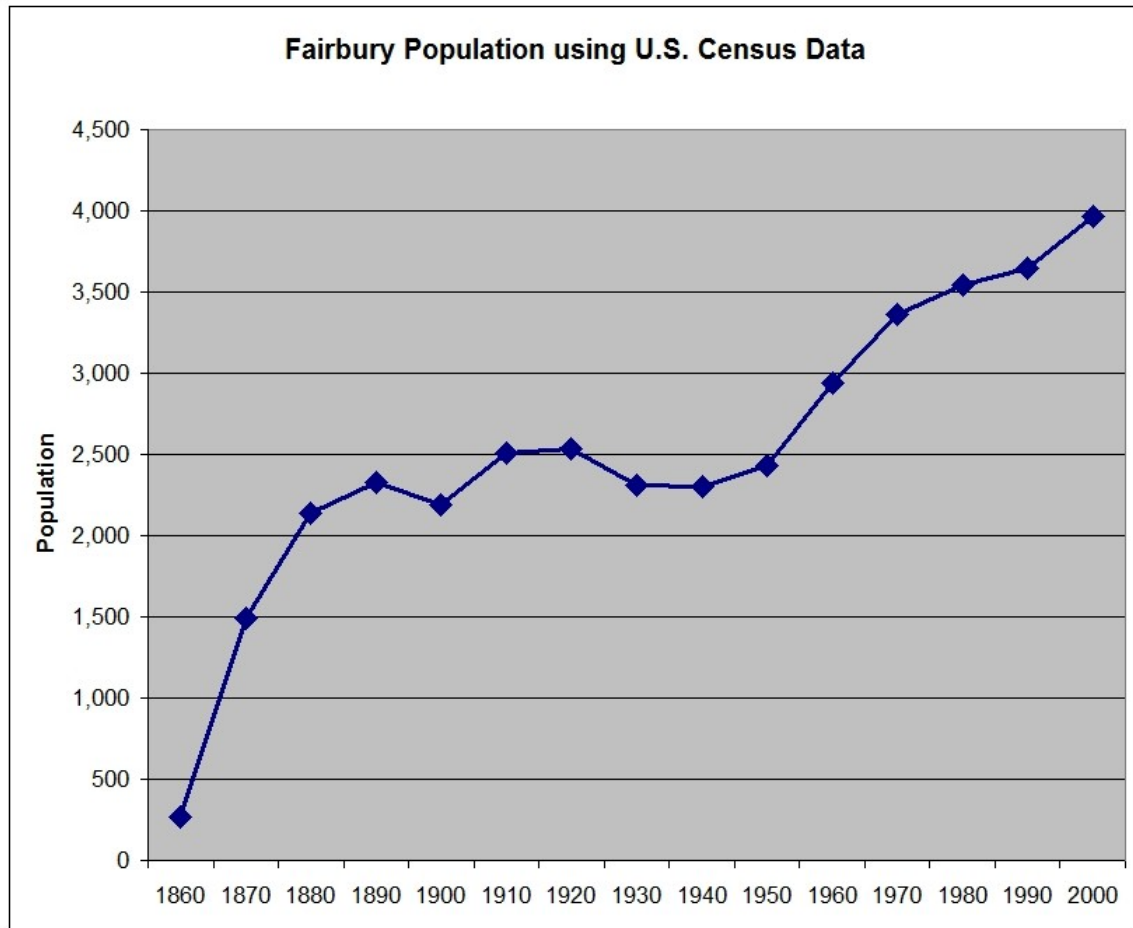
The initial discovery of coal led to four coal mines going into operation. Miners were needed to mine the coal. People came as far away as Europe to find jobs in the Fairbury Coal mines. These coal mines also drove the need for more support services as well.

Boom Town

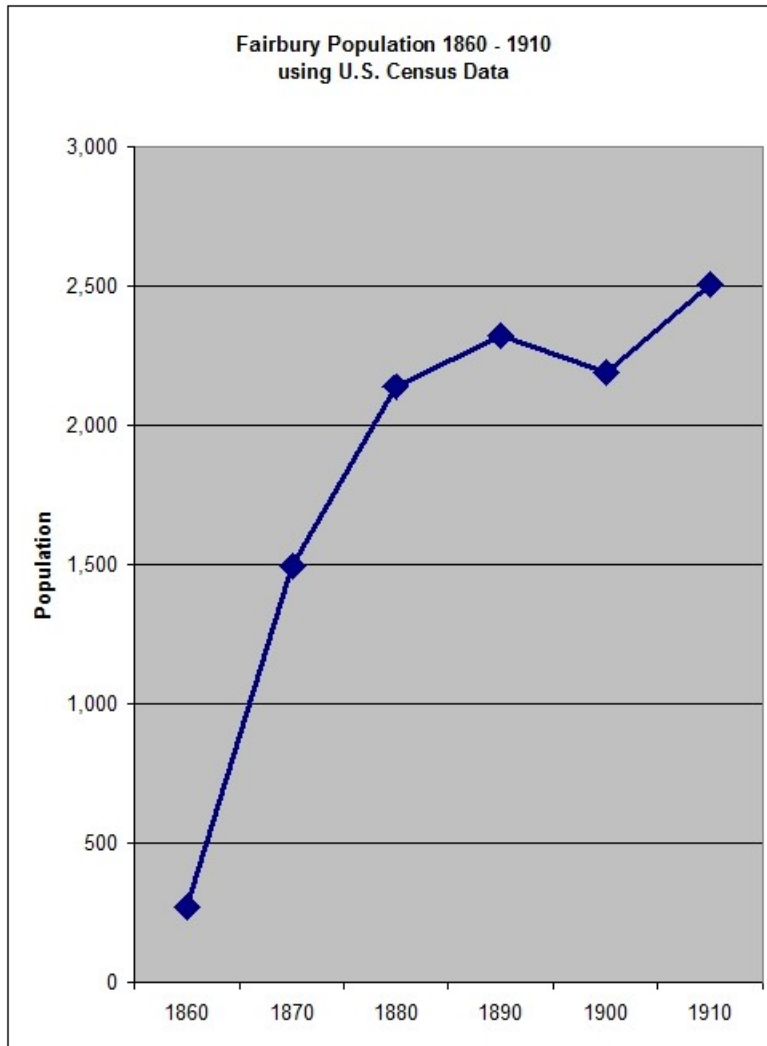
The combination of the TP&W railroad, agriculture, and coal mining caused Fairbury to become a boom town. Below is the historical population of Fairbury in tabular form:

Year	Population
1860	269
1870	1493
1880	2140
1890	2324
1900	2187
1910	2505
1920	2532
1930	2310
1940	2300
1950	2433
1960	2937
1970	3359
1980	3544
1990	3643
2000	3968

Below is a chart showing the historical population of Fairbury:



Now let us focus on the "boom" period of 1860 to 1910:



The chart above shows that Fairbury was a huge "boom town" between its founding in 1857 and 1910!

Wild Times in Fairbury

The rapid growth in population, fueled by many coal miners, caused Fairbury to be a "wild" town in the 1860 to 1910 period.

In the March 27, 1976, edition of the Pontiac Daily Leader, the following was noted about early Fairbury:

Among the city's other features were a Chinese laundry man who eventually moved to Pontiac, nine barbers, 15 painters, 17 doctors in 1878 and 54 registered houses of prostitution in 1896, plus others outside the city limits

In 1879, this story from Alma Lewis James' **Nicks from the Blade** took place in Fairbury:

ALLEGED ABDUCTION.

An Infernal Outrage.

Last Saturday, States Attorney Murdock received information that a chaste young woman had been decoyed to the bagnio of Leonard Gardner, and was detained there against her will, for the purpose of forcing her into prostitution.

In the evening Mr. Murdock dispatched Z.T. Hanna and D.A. Fraley to Gardner's house to ascertain the facts. They had considerable difficulty in getting the desired information, as Gardner refused to let them see or talk with the young lady, but by a little strategy they finally succeeded in getting an interview with the girl, who gave her name as Annie Manning, from Wapella, DeWitt County, this state.

She was found to be very much frightened and grieved at the situation she had been placed in. She Stated that Mollie Stewart, an inmate of the Gardner house, who is her cousin, had written to her saying that a situation could be got for her in this city, at a hotel, to wait on table, for which \$3 a week would be paid.

Not knowing that Mollie had gone to the everlasting bad, and believing it to be as represented, she wrote, accepting the position of waiter, as offered. On Friday night of last week, she arrived in town and was Met at Depot by Gardner and the girl Stewart, and taken to the bagnio outside the northwest limits of the city, where to her grief and mortification, she discovered the true character of the house and inmates.

She further stated she was detained there against her will – that efforts had been made by threats and otherwise, To Force Her into Prostitution, which she had resisted, and wanted to leave the house, but had fears of her life, if she attempted to do it without friends to accompany her.

Having learned this much, Fraley and Hanna returned to town and a State's Warrant for the persons of Leonard Gardner and Mollie Stewart was sworn out by E.T. Hanna, who, as constable, accompanied by D.A. Fraley and John Allum, proceeded about 11 o'clock at night to make the arrest. When informed of the business, Gardner swore he would not be arrested, and ran upstairs,

at the head of which he stopped, Drew a Pistol, and Swore He Would Kill Hanna if he made an attempt to arrest.

A rush was made by Allum, Hanna and others to the top of the stairs. Gardner retreated to the end of the hall, where he stood at bay, with pistol in hand, swearing he would kill the man who attempted to arrest him.

At this juncture, John Allum suddenly presented a cocked pistol into the face of Gardner, and ordered him to drop his pistol, which he did in short order, and subsequently gave up the pistol to Allum. The arrest was then made by Hanna.

After some considerable "palavering," Gardner gave his gold watch and chain as security for his appearance in the court of Squire Hanna, Monday morning. The girl (Miss Manning) was then taken away, and placed in keeping of Marshal Allum, at his residence on Third Street, where she remained until Tuesday.

The Prisoners took a change of Venue from Hanna's court to Squire Shepherd where they waived examination, and entered in bonds to appear at the May term of the Circuit Court.

One great mistake was made when the girl was taken away from the sink of iniquity that her trunk was not also taken, as Miss Manning claims the trunk was broken open and robbed of letters which would have been evidence in the trial.

Deep Indignation was expressed by most all classes of citizens, at the dastardly and vicious attempt to ruin an innocent girl. Some of the best citizens, feeling that the law could hardly punish the outrage as it deserved, expressed the belief that nothing but the court of Judge Lynch would ever rid this community of the vile den where such wrongs could be attempted or perpetrated. Certain it is the patience of our people will not tolerate the nuisance much longer, judging from the feeling expressed on Monday when the prospect seemed fair that the guilty parties were likely to go un-whipped of justice.

Two City Marshals Murdered

Fairbury also had two City Marshals murdered. On February 16, 1899, City Marshal Fred Baird was shot and killed in a basement of a Fairbury home. On May 5, 1910, City Marshal Amos Brown was shot and killed on west Main Street. For further information on these two murders, see the author's book titled *History of Murders Committed in Fairbury, Illinois*.

Alma Lewis James' book *Stuffed Clubs & Antimacassars*

See her book for more stories about early Fairbury.

Fairbury Main Street Awning Poles

The author conducted an interview with Jim Steidinger on Oct 27, 2016 at Fairview Haven Nursing Home in Fairbury, Illinois. Jim noted the Main Street of Fairbury often had awning type roofs over the sidewalk in front of the stores. Jim said the poles that held up these awning type roofs were actually used boiler tubes from the steam boilers used in the coal mines.

These boiler tubes eventually become plugged and corroded. The used tubes are replaced with new tubes. In the Facility Engineering field, this is commonly called "re-tubing a boiler". Rather than throwing the tubes away, they were used as awning type roof supports.

Chapter 6

Impact of Fairbury Coal Discovery on Illinois

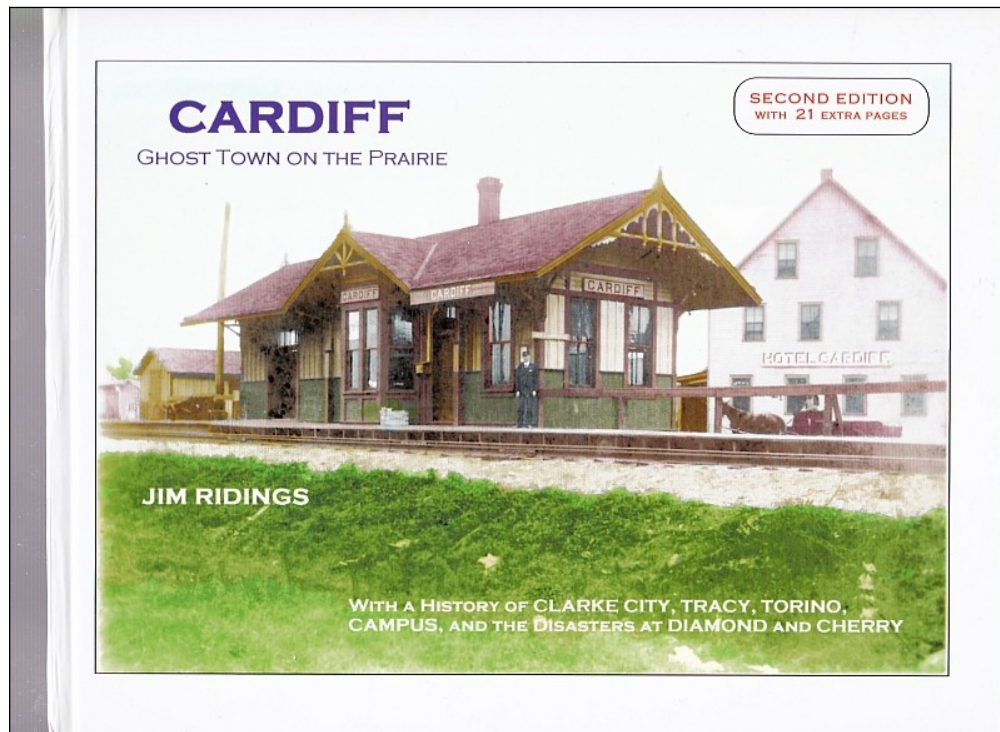
Once John and Henry Marsh found coal in Fairbury, other cities quickly started mining for coal.

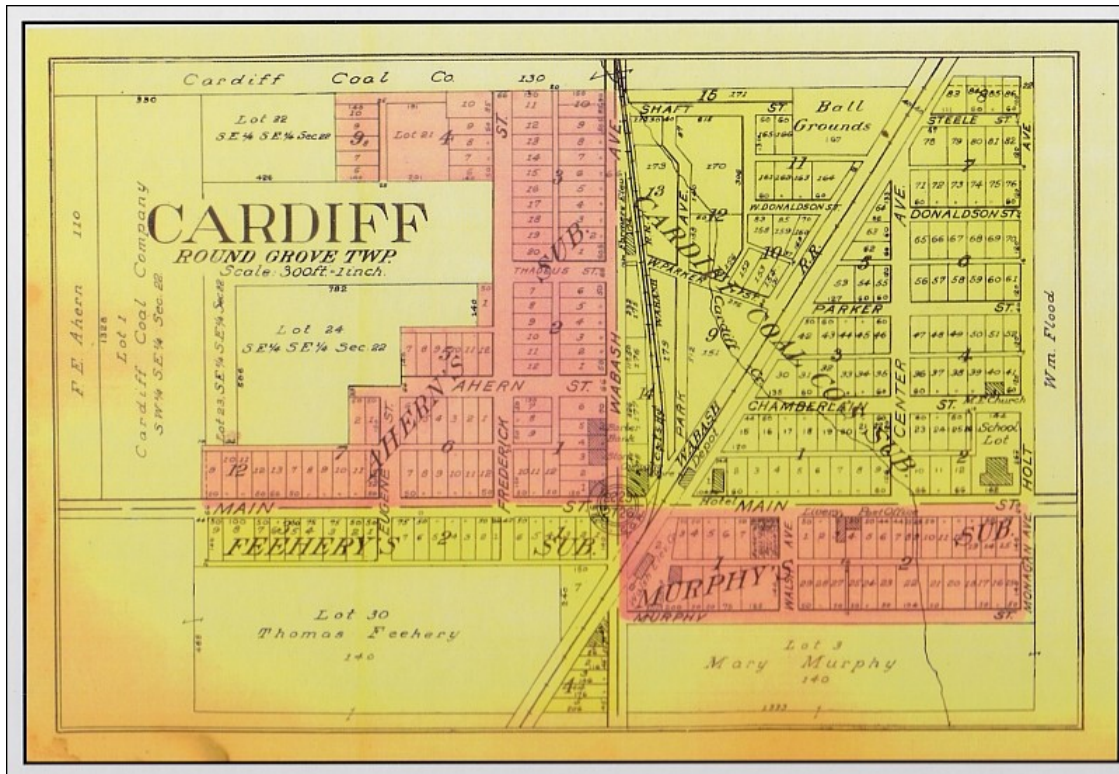
According to the 1878 book, *The History of Livingston County*, coal was found in Pontiac in 1865 and a second shaft was dug in Fairbury in 1868. Coal was found in Streator in 1872, in Cornell in 1875, and in Cayuga in 1878.

Cardiff

In 1899, coal was discovered at Cardiff, southeast of Dwight. Cardiff was a boom town that only lasted 13 years before the coal ran out. Cardiff quickly disappeared back into the prairie.

Jim Ridings wrote a book chronicling the rise and fall of Cardiff. The front and back covers of his book are shown below:





If you are interested in learning more about early coal mining in Central Illinois, Rider's book is filled with information about the boom town of Cardiff.

Bloomington Jealous of Fairbury's Coal Mine

In the November 20, 1862, edition of the Bloomington Pantagraph newspaper, the editor wrote a story about the new coal mine in Fairbury:

The Coal Question.—In the present state of affairs we do not know but it might be as well to offer a suggestion, for the topic certainly presents itself under the rather startling prospect that we *may* be deprived of our supply of coal this winter. We believe the subject has been talked of before without any results, but as the thing certainly looks feasible there is no reason why it should be dropped entirely. We therefore propound the question—why not bore for coal in this vicinity? Sundry good reasons can be adduced why we should make the attempt, not the least of which is that we are now entirely dependent upon places abroad, which are likely to fail us at any time. We have the following reasons to give why we think it would pay to search for coal here. Geological investigations show that we are nearly in the centre of the great coal fields of Illinois, which crops out on all sides, and there is no reason to suppose it is at so great a depth as to prevent mining successfully. On the contrary, at Fairbury, a short distance comparatively from here, they have found a vein of coal of five feet thickness, only 280 feet below the surface. If we should even have to penetrate the earth for the distance of 400 feet, or more, it would richly repay us to find such a vein, or even one of less thickness.

Coal mining is successfully carried on in England at much greater depths. There is not much likelihood we should have to go to a greater depth than 400 feet to find coal, judging from the inclination of the fields, and the distance from us at which it crops out. No one would hesitate to say that it would pay to sink a shaft if a coal vein of four or five feet in thickness could be found at the depth of 400 feet. Now why may not the attempt be made to find it. Let an association be formed, and our citizens contribute something towards paying the expenses of *boring for coal*. Should it be found, of which there is little doubt, funds would quickly be forthcoming for sinking a shaft, and perfecting all the necessary arrangements for successful mining. Now we say again—why not try it? The advantages which would accrue from producing our own coal are too evident to need setting forth in this article. We hope our citizens will consider the matter, and that with a view to take some action in the premises, that in the future at least we may be rendered independent of the caprice of miners abroad, and the consequent scarcity of coal which now so seriously affects us. Let the citizens inform themselves concerning the subject, and the very promising inducements it holds out for making the trial. To do this there is no better man to apply to than Prof. Wilbur, who will doubtless be glad to afford all necessary information.

1903 Coal Trains

In the 1903 book, *Shipping Mines and Coal Railroads of Illinois and Indiana*, there is a table showing all the railroads serving Illinois coal mines:

INDEX TO COAL RAILROADS OF ILLINOIS AND INDIANA					
	Abbreviation used in list of mines	No. of mines in Illinois	No. of mines in Indiana	Total	Page
Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe	AT&SF	17		17	6
Baltimore & Ohio Southwestern	B&OSW	19	6	25	6
Chicago & Alton	C&A	42		42	7
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy	CB&Q	33		33	9
Chicago & Eastern Illinois	C&EI	22	38	60	10
Chicago & Northwestern	C&NW	6		6	12
Chicago, Peoria & St. Louis	CP&StL	14		14	12
Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific	CRI&P	7		7	13
Chicago & Southeastern	C&Se		1	1	13
Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis	CCC&StL	10	8	18	13
Elgin, Joliet & Eastern	EJ&E	12		11	14
Evansville & Terre Haute	E&TH		16	16	15
Evansville & Indianapolis	E&I		10	10	15
Fulton County Narrow Gauge	FCRy	4		4	16
Galesburg & Great Eastern	G&GE	1		1	16
Illinois Central	IC	96	15	111	16
Illinois Southern	IS	3		3	20
Illinois Terminal	IT	2		2	20
Indiana, Decatur & Western	ID&W	1		1	20
Indiana, Illinois & Iowa	II&I	5		5	20
Iowa Central	Iowa C	7		7	21
Jacksonville & St. Louis	J&StL	7		7	21
Lake Erie & Western	LE&W	3		3	21
Louisville & Nashville	L&N	17	1	18	21
Mobile & Ohio	M&O	9		9	22
Pawnee	Pawnee	1		1	23
Peoria & Pekin Terminal	P&PT	3		3	23
Peoria & Pekin Union	P&PU	4		4	23
Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis	PC&StL		15	15	23
Quincy, Carrolltown & St. Louis	QC&StL	1		1	24
Rock Island & Peoria	RI&P	5		5	24
Southern	S R'y	11	20	31	24
Southern Indiana	SI		18	18	25
St. Louis, Troy & Eastern	StLT&E	3		3	26
Terre Haute & Indianapolis	TH&I	6	29	35	26
Toledo, Peoria & Western	TP&W	10		10	28
Toledo, St. Louis & Western	TStL&W	3	4	7	28
Toluca, Marquette & Northern	TM&N	2		2	29
Wabash, Chester & Western	WC&W	2		2	29
Wabash	Wabash	22		22	29

So by 1903, there was a total of 410 coal mines in Illinois being served by 40 different railroads!

The same 1903 book also has a table showing the coal mines served by the TP&W railroad:

Toledo, Peoria & Western Railway.		
MINES - ILLINOIS.		
LOCATION.	OPERATORS.	HEADQUARTERS.
Breeds	Coppras Creek Coal Co.....	Canton, Ill.
Breeds	J. R. Riley	Breeds, Ill.
Canton	Canton Union Coal Co.....	Canton, Ill.
Cuba	Applegate & Lewis.....	Cuba, Ill.
Cuba	Patrick Mahan	Cuba, Ill.
Fairbury	Co-operative Coal Co.....	Fairbury, Ill.
Kingston	Newsam Bros.....	Peoria, Ill.
Orchard Mines	Third Vein Coal Co.....	Orchard Mines, Ill.
Reed City	Newsam Bros.....	Peoria, Ill.
Reed City	James Walker	Mapleton, Ill.
OPERATORS - ILLINOIS.		
OPERATORS.	LOCATION.	HEADQUARTERS.
Applegate & Lewis	Cuba	Cuba, Ill.
Canton Union Coal Co.....	Canton	Canton, Ill.
Co-operative Coal Co.....	Fairbury	Fairbury, Ill.
Coppras Creek Coal Co.....	Breeds	Canton, Ill.
Mahan, Patrick	Cuba	Cuba, Ill.
Newsam Bros.....	Kingston	Peoria, Ill.
Newsam Bros.....	Reed City	Peoria, Ill.
Riley, J. R.....	Breeds	Breeds, Ill.
Third Vein Coal Co.....	Orchard Mines	Orchard Mines, Ill.
Walker, James	Reed City	Mapleton, Ill.

Chapter 7

Fairbury Coal Miners

1880 U.S. Census Data

The Echoes Museum in Fairbury did research and found all the Fairbury people who identified themselves as being a coal miner for an occupation.

Men Employed in Coal Mining Industry (alphabetical)

Fairbury 1880 Census

<u>first name</u>	<u>last name</u>	<u>age</u>	<u>occupation</u>
Patrick	Curran	52	Coal Miner
James	Daley	23	Coal Miner
John	Daley	50	Coal Miner
John	Daley	18	Coal Miner
John	Donnelly	37	Coal Miner
Joseph	Easton	17	Coal Miner
Thomas	Easton	51	Coal Miner
James	Gibb	46	Coal Operator
Thomas	Gibb	26	Coal Miner
Obadiah	Green	46	Coal Miner
Jerry	Griffith	30	Laborer in Coal
James	Hagan	39	Laborer in Coal Shaft
Benjamin	Henshaw	22	Laborer in Coal Shaft
John	Hetherington	20	Coal Miner
Cornellus	Hotchkins	17	Coal Miner
James	Hotchkins	13	Laborer in Coal Shaft
John	Hotchkins	15	Laborer in Coal Shaft
Michael	Hotchkins	44	Coal Operator
Allen	Ireland	29	Coal Miner
William	Ireland	46	Coal Miner
Albert	Johnson	31	Coal Miner
Thomas	Kelley	38	Coal Miner
John	Kirkwood	45	Coal Operator
John	Kirkwood	18	Coal Miner

<u>first name</u>	<u>last name</u>	<u>age</u>	<u>occupation</u>
Robert	Knight	44	Coal Operator
Henry	Lamb (or Laub)	20	Coal Miner
Claremont	Marcie	35	Coal Miner
James	McCurdy	46	Coal Miner
James	McCurdy	19	Coal Miner
James	McKiernan	28	Engineer at Coal Shaft
Thomas	McKiernan	49	Engineer at Coal Shaft
Henry	Meadows	38	Coal Miner
Patrick	Moran	45	Coal Miner
John	Munroe	26	Coal Miner
Peter	Munroe	19	Coal Miner
David	Pierce	36	Laborer in Coal Shaft
John	Rightsell	22	Laborer in Coal Shaft
Carlisle	Smith	26	Coal Miner
Thomas	Sterling	25	Coal Miner
William	Sterling	53	Coal Miner
Jeremiah	Sullivan	45	Coal Miner
Jerry	Sullivan	18	Coal Miner
Patrick	Sullivan	45	Coal Miner
Joseph	Walmsley	35	Coal Miner
James	Westwood	29	Coal Miner
William	Westwood	18	Coal Miner
(illegible) Alexander?	Wilson	37	Coal Miner
Hugh	Wilson	37	Coal Miner

Coal Miners Biographies from 1878 Livingston County History Book

JAMES GIBB, Superintendent and Lessee of the East Coal Shaft; Fairbury; born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, March 24, 1844; came to this country in 1852, locating in Schuylkill Co., Penn.; came to Illinois in the Fall of 1859, locating in La Salle, where he remained two years, then removed to Fairbury, his present home, and engaged in coal mining; in the Spring of 1866 he took charge of the East Coal Shaft as Superintendent, and has operated the mine since. Married in 1855, to Miss Ellen Young; she was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland; children—Mary,

H., Ella H., Nettie Y., Jane, Walter S. and Maggie. Mr. G. is a member of Tarbolton Lodge, No. 351, A., F & A. M.

JOHN GARDNER, Constable, Fairbury; born at Tollcross, near Glasgow, Scotland, Sept. 14, 1838; came to this country in July, 1868, locating at Fairbury, his present home, where he engaged in coal mining, until January, 1876, there meeting with a severe accident while blasting, disabling his right arm. He was elected Constable in April, 1876, and re-elected in April, 1877. Married in June, 1863, to Miss Ann Arbuckle, who was born near Glasgow, Scotland, Oct. 11, 1837; six children—Catharine, Walter, Nellie B., James, John and Annie.

THOMAS McKEIRNAN, SR., engineer at the East Coal Shaft, Fairbury; born in New York City in July, 1832; removed to Trenton, N. J., in childhood, thence to Pennsylvania; in 1854 he removed to North Carolina, and engaged in coal mining, which he continued until 1867, then removing to Illinois, locating at Pontiac, this county; the following year he purchased a farm in Charlotte Township, and engaged in farming, which he followed for two years, then removed to Fairbury his present home; owns eighty acres of land, valued at \$2,800. Married in 1851, to Bridget McCaffrie; she was born in Ireland; died in 1872; his second marriage was in 1874, to Elizabeth McLochlin; she was born in Ireland; there were ten children by the first union, eight living—James, William, Mary A., Agnes C., John, Thomas Jr., Edward and Frances; lost two—Terry, died in 1868; Bridget in 1860. Mr. McKeirnan is President of the I. C. B. U.

JOHN WATSON, Superintendent of the West Coal Shaft, Fairbury; born in Scotland, near Glasgow, April 19, 1833; came to this country in January, 1858, locating near Chillicothe, Peoria Co., Ill.; soon after his arrival he discovered coal on Senatchwine Creek, some six miles distant from Chillicothe; this was the first coal discovered on that stream; Mr. W. opened a mine at this place in the Summer of 1858; after spending some four years in mining at Peoria, Peru and La Salle, he removed to Fairbury, his present home, and commenced work for Mr. J. L. Marsh on what is now known as the West Shaft. in August, 1862, where he remained until 1873; removed to Montana Territory in Sept., 1873, and engaged in gold and silver mining, returning to Fairbury in Sept., 1877. Married in 1854 to Mary Dempster; she was born in Scotland; nine children; six living—Christina, Margaret, James, Anna B., Robert and Alexander; lost three—Mary died in 1862. Jane in 1862, John in 1866. Mr. W. owns 640 acres of land in Nebraska, valued at \$3,200.

1900 Census

Lela Colwell was brutally murdered in Fairbury. For further information on her murder, see the author's book titled *History of Murders Committed in Fairbury, Illinois*. Lela's father, John Colwell, 1865 - 1936 was a Fairbury coal miner per the U.S. Census of 1900.

April 15, 1954 Fairbury Blade Obituary

**Services Today For
James F. Finnegan**

James F. Finnegan, also known to his friends as "Tim" Finnegan, passed away at the Livingston county hospital near Pontiac Tuesday afternoon following a heart attack. Mr. Finnegan, who had been a patient at the hospital since December, 1951, was aged 87 years, eight months and 12 days.

Funeral services will be held this afternoon at three o'clock from the Mowry funeral home. The Rev. John Foss will officiate and interment will be in Grace-land cemetery.

Mr. Finnegan was born August 1, 1866, at Chatsworth, a son of Arthur and Esther (West-berry) Finnegan. As a small boy he accompanied his parents to Fairbury. He attended the grade schools here and later followed the occupation of a coal miner, and also worked on farms in this community.

He was married to Miss Jostie Keyes in Fairbury in 1890.

Survivors besides his wife include one son, Floyd. Both live in California. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews in the Fairbury vicinity.

January 12, 1967 Obituary

Rites Today For 'Big Dick' McAllister, Ex-Gridder, Postmaster, Dies at 87

Richard A. 'Big Dick' McAllister, 87, long a colorful and sometimes controversial figure in Fairbury history, will be buried today with a funeral mass from St. John's Catholic Church in Fairbury, Rev. William Boucher will officiate at the 10 a.m. service, and interment will be made in St. John's cemetery.

McAllister, a former Fairbury postmaster, for 17 years until retirement in 1950, died Monday, Jan 9, at the Livingston County Nursing home where he was a patient nine months. His body was taken to the Cook Funeral home where visitation began on Wednesday.

He was born in Scotland November 20, 1879, a son of John and Catherine (McRoyal) McAllister. He married Anna Salmon in Fairbury June 30, 1905. She died in 1949. A brother also preceded him in death. He is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Agnes Richmond of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Mrs. Jane Tolbert, Peoria.

McAllister's formal education was modest, and after completing the seventh grade, he began work in the local coal mines. He was to continue as a student, self-taught in sports, politics, and union activities for most of his life.

McAllister served for years as secretary of the United Mine Workers local in Fairbury. He became an expert in parliamentary procedure, and insisted on following those rules at all meetings he attended, often to the chagrin of others.

For 50 years, he was a Democratic precinct committeeman in Fairbury, and in 1932 was an unsuccessful candidate for the State Senate against Simon Lantz. He also had lengthy service as a Fairbury alderman, and served many years as chairman of the streets and alley committee, a post in which he took particular pride.

But it was as a football player, 60 or more years ago, that he was perhaps best known. In that time, he was a leader in creating the reputation that Fairbury enjoyed for decades as an athletic capital.

McAllister's football for pay travels, although for sums paltry by comparison with today's professional gridgers, took him to Peru, Chicago, and Peoria for weekend games, and he was regarded as one of the leading tackles of his day in the state.

McAllister's determination to do things in the manner he deemed right and proper often brought him into conflict and controversy, but even his foes respected him as a man of integrity, who never hesitated to state his position in any manner.

He was a member of St. John's church and a secretary of the St. John's Cemetery Association. He belonged to the St. John's Men club and the Altar and Rosary Society.

Archibald B. Kirkwood



Archibald B. Kirkwood, general manager of the Wear Coal Company and president of the Standard Mercantile Company, Pittsburg, Kansas, is one of the most practical business men and coal operators as well as most successful in the state of Kansas. Energy, industry and quickness of action have brought him from the humblest position in the coal mining industry to the highest, and he is a fine type of the man who finds his opportunities at hand, whatever his occupation, and rises to the top. He has been

identified with the coal industry since the age of thirteen years, and the subsequent thirty years have been filled with well directed labor and have brought him to the important position which he now holds in the commercial and industrial activities of Pittsburg and this part of Kansas.

Mr. Kirkwood was born at Lonaconing, Allegany county, Maryland, in 1859, a son of John and Rachel (Gibb) Kirkwood. His father was born in Glasgow, Scotland, whence he emigrated as a young man to the United States, locating in Maryland. He was a practical coal miner, reared to the trade in his native country, and came to this country to find a larger field of operations. About 1862 he brought his family west and located at Fairbury, Livingston county, Illinois, where he opened and operated the second coal mine of that town, conducting it under the name of the Central Coal Company. He was a successful coal operator there until the late eighties, and then came to the coal fields of Kansas. He was assistant superintendent of the Osage Coal Company at Scranton for some time, and in 1893 came to Pittsburg, where his son Archibald had previously located. His death occurred in this city, but his wife survives him and is still living in this place. She was also born in Scotland.

Archibald B. Kirkwood attended school in Fairbury, Illinois, but at the age of thirteen entered the coal mines. He began with the occupation of keeping trap door, later drove mules, was then a practical coal digger, and from that came through all the positions of pit boss, mine foreman, superintendent, up to his present important place as general manager of a number of large mines. There is nothing about a mine of which he does not have a thorough practical working knowledge.

In 1880 Mr. Kirkwood left Fairbury and went to Montana, where he was a sub-contractor in the construction of the Big Horn tunnel on the Northern Pacific Railroad, in Custer county, where he remained nine months. He then came to Carbondale, Osage county, Kansas, where the coal mines were just then beginning to be of some importance. He became mine foreman for the Kansas Carbon Coal Company, which was the coal department of the old Kansas Pacific Railroad. From there he went to Scranton, in the same county, and was made foreman for the Osage Mining Company, the coal department of the Santa Fe Railroad. While in that mining region he first met Mr. Frank E. Wear, with whom he later became associated in the mining business. Mr. Kirkwood remained at Scranton until 1888, and then went to work for Mr. Wear at Liberal, Missouri, where they leased and operated a mine. They were there two years, thence went to Minden, Missouri, where they opened up the No. 1 mine, known as the "Sunshine." In the meantime, in 1890, the Wear Coal Company had been organized, and in 1891 Mr. Kirkwood came to Pittsburg as superintendent of the mine which they had opened. In 1900 he was elected general manager of all the coal mines of the Wear Coal Company, which include nine mines in the Pittsburg coal district, and a number of other mines at Collinsville, Oolagah and Poteau, Indian Territory, and mines in Arkansas and Missouri. They employ about eleven hundred men in the Pittsburg district alone. Mr. Kirkwood is a stockholder in the Wear Coal Company, of which F. E. Wear is president, T. G. Wear, vice president, and N. S. Wear, secretary.

Mr. Kirkwood is president of the Standard Mercantile Company of Pittsburg, which operates here in Pittsburg what is said to be the largest department store in Kansas. Its trade in 1903 amounted to over three hundred and sixty thousand dollars. The company

was organized in 1899 to succeed the mercantile establishments of the Wear Coal Company and the Kansas and Texas Coal Company. The store occupies the largest commercial building in Pittsburg, a two-story brick and stone structure, with a frontage of one hundred feet on Broadway and one hundred and twenty-five feet on Seventh street, and is modern and well equipped in every particular. The company also has a store in Minden, Missouri.

Mr. Kirkwood affiliates with the Masonic blue lodge, chapter, council and Commandery at Pittsburg, and with Ararat Temple of the Mystic Shrine at Kansas City; is also a member of the lodge of the Elks, the United Commercial Travelers, the Independent Order of Red Men and the Fraternal Order of Eagles. He was married at Windsor, Illinois, March 30, 1880, to Miss Ida M. Bowman, and they have three children: Ray N., who is wife of Dr. Robert B. Gibbs, of Pittsburg; Miss Edna and Roy.

Pages 392-396 from *A Twentieth century history and biographical record of Crawford County, Kansas*, by Home Authors; Illustrated. Published by Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, IL: 1905, 656 p. ill. Transcribed by Carolyn Ward, in November, 2003.

Mr. Sullivan from Ireland

Theresa Ripley wrote a book titled *Irish Roots: Finding the O'Sullivans*. It is available at Amazon.com at <http://tinyurl.com/zletbm8>.

She traced her ancestors back to Ireland. They came from the United States to Fairbury, Illinois. Her ancestor worked in the Fairbury coal mines long enough to save money to buy farm land. These ancestors are buried in the Catholic cemetery north of Fairbury.

She does a great job of describing how during the potato famine, so many Irish died that they ran out of caskets to bury them in. They had to resort to a casket with a hinged bottom. They lowered the dead person down into the grave, pulled a rope which released the hinged bottom, then pulled up the casket to re-use it on the next burial.

She also describes how they had an Irish wake funeral type ceremony for those moving to America. The family figured they would never see them again, so they adopted a ceremony similar to a wake.

She then describes the long and difficult journey by ship across the ocean from Ireland to America. She describes life in Fairbury and working in the coal mines.

This is a great book if you had Irish relatives who came to America, and you want to learn more about the typical experiences they dealt with.

A portion of her book is extracted below. Unfortunately, she made two distinct errors in her research. She repeated the Bat Masterson as a Fairbury coal miner myth in her book. She also states there were no fatalities in the Fairbury coal mines, which is also untrue.

She wrote the book as if she were one of the two brothers who came to Fairbury.

1871

I was 32 in 1871 and Honora and I had five children: Hannah, 14; Jerry, 11; Mary, 6; John, 3; and Cornelius, almost 2. We lived in Fairbury, Illinois, and I was a coal miner.

My brother, Jerry, and his wife, Mary, also lived in Fairbury and they had three children: John, 7; Mary Elizabeth, 5; and Maggie, 3. Brother Jerry worked as a laborer.

As before, I had followed my brother. When we met Jerry in N.Y. in 1863, he had saved enough money to move West. He did that later in the year. He moved to Fairbury in 1863. At that time Fairbury was in the middle of its boom period. From 1860-1870 Fairbury grew from 269 to 3500 people.

What brought people? The coal mines. Many English, Irish, and Welsh came to work the mines. My brother was among them and he brought his wife-to-be with him and they married in 1864 shortly after they arrived. As for us, after we arrived in New York in 1863 I spent the next two years working and saving money so we could follow Jerry. I knew anyplace had to be better than what we had found in the New York squalor. This city was no fit place to raise a family. I was used to open places and green spaces. Jerry assured me that was what Fairbury was like. We were not disappointed.

We arrived in Fairbury in 1865, just a year after it had incorporated as a village. It was laid out in 1857 and the first store came in 1858. It was followed by the first tavern and post office and blacksmith shop, all in 1858. The first flouring mill came in 1859 and the bank arrived in 1864.

But what brought us, other than Jerry, was the prospect of work. More specifically, the coal fields.

The first shaft, on the West side, was sunk in 1862 and a vein was struck at 216 feet. It was the first such discovery in central Illinois. A second shaft, this time on the East side, was started in April 1867. The supervisor for the mine was Mr. Gibb who was a native of Scotland. He was a fair boss. He was a man who came to this country in 1852. He understood how to work with men and he understood coal mining. Under him, we were able to mine 75 tons daily year round.

I worked both the West and East side of the mines. First I worked on the East side. After that first shaft was built, an independent village grew up around the mine which was called Marsh Town. I did not come to this mine until after it had been in operation for three years, but it was my first job in Fairbury. Among the many men in the mines, one fellow stood out from the rest. He was tall, determined and not a trouble maker. Neither did he back down when trouble happened. As you can well imagine, the immigrants from different countries did not always get along. My tall and even tempered fellow worker went on from Fairbury to Dodge City where the townsfolk thought he might help to bring law and order to their city. They made him U.S. Marshall. His name was Bat Masterson. Mentioning Bat Masterson may give you a sense of what Fairbury was like in those days.

Like all frontier mining towns in the dime novels you read; it was rough and tumble. The miners drank and got into brawls. They also brought prosperity to Fairbury. The coal we produced gave settlers a cheap source of fuel and supplied the railroads with fuel so the forests did not have to be cut for energy. And it was 100% better than New York.

Even though the mines were rough and produced men who were tough, many of us clung to different ways. A Roman Catholic church was organized. Two years after we arrived Fr. O'Neill, the first Irish priest west of the Alleghenies, was saying our mass once a month. Officially he was attached to the Pontiac parish, but he said mass and did our baptisms, weddings, and funerals. In 1868 we got our own priest, Fr. John Fanning. We were one of the original 30 families who belonged to the church. So was my brother's family.

Another early memory I have of Fairbury is the bad fires. The fire of 1868 burned down 18 stores. It was started by the spark from a passing locomotive. There were two more fires in 1869. We were hit far worse by fire than any other surrounding small community.

Our children and my brother's children were being raised as Americans. My Hannah and Jerry could not even remember Ireland, but Hannah still had nightmares of our ocean crossing. In 1871 Hannah and Jerry attended the South Side school built in 1868. It was a dingy and weather beaten building but the learning was good. I was hopeful for their future in this new land even though the people were still healing from the conflicts of the Civil War. Civil War veterans were venerated.

Brother Jerry and I remained silent as possible on our lack of involvement. From my point of view, the Negro should have all the rights and responsibilities the rest of us had. I could see no difference by the color of the skin, but others felt differently. Fairbury had more colored than you might think. In the early 1870's there were 100 Negroes in and around Fairbury who had come from Mr. Sullivant's (no relation to us) farm in neighboring Ford Co. As the times changed, Mr. Sullivant got rid of his help, and they wandered toward Fairbury where they lived and worshipped.

Let me tell you about one fine day our whole family witnessed in Spring 1870. Richard Quarles was the first Negro to vote and exercise the franchise of the 15th Amendment in Fairbury. We all called him Side Hill Dick because he had one leg several inches shorter than the other. In that spring township election Side Hill Dick voted and the event brought out more people than the

circus coming to town. We all knew we were witnessing history. For me, and most all of us, positive history.

As my 30's started, I remember being positive about myself, my family, my work, and my newly adopted country. My one remaining nagging and lingering ache was our families back in Ireland. We heard infrequently from them and as year after year passed, our feelings did not change for the people we left. Of course, our sense of family changed because we did not know what happened on a day-to-basis. This was brought home in late 1871 when I received a letter from my sister telling me Father had died six months earlier. I was in total disbelief for days. How could my own father be dead for over six months without me knowing it. Jerry and I had a service at St. John's Church and mourned the loss the best we could from such a distance. We vowed we would never forget. We would always be Irish and children of our parents, no matter where we lived.

1880

In the summer of 1880 I was 41, and my youngest daughter, Nora, would turn 3 on August 26. She was a happy child. Our family was now at 10. Our oldest daughter, Johanna, was already off on her own in Chicago working as a tailor and our other daughter, Mary, was 15. The rest of the family were boys. Jerry, our oldest son, was working in the coal mines with me. John and Cornelius were in school and Daniel and James were at home.

The constant companions, though, were Nora and James. Being the youngest and only two years apart, they sometimes acted like the rest of us didn't exist, except to make their life more fun.

In 1880 I had worked in the coal mines for 15 years. I was working in the mine that had been started by Gibb, Knight, Hotchkiss, and Kirkwood out of Streator. They had purchased three acres near the old Marsh land, where the first mine had been struck, for \$1000. The owners spent almost \$10,000 to get a coal at a depth of 176 feet.

My son Jerry and I and my brother Jerry were a part of finding coal in that mine. The mine was going day and night, working three shifts. It was a room-and-pillar type mine. By that I mean we would mine 24 feet and leave 12 feet for support. We used props to hold up the rock. We went down into the mine in a cage. It was pitch dark and we would wear carbide lamps attached to our hats. We were sure we were near the coal the day we reached slate.

Our efforts redoubled and by the next day we struck the shaft and the thickness and quality of coal was good. The celebration by the miners was loud and boisterous. We shot off guns and made as much noise as anyone could expect. Having a mine come in was a time none of us would ever forget.

After the mine came in, it was back to the daily grind and work of bringing the coal to the surface. We would remove coal by a combination of pick, machines, and blasting. Steam engine hoisted cars would take the coal to the surface and the coal was dumped above ground.

At times mules were used to haul coal in the mines. The life of these mules were about as low as you could ever get. The mules were lowered into the shafts and stayed there only to come up in the summer to graze. As I would finish a shift in the mine after hour upon hour of darkness and foul air, I would think of these animals staying there day after day without relief.

Mine work was difficult, no way around that. First of all, the mines were only five feet high and all work had to be done bent over. The biggest problems were ventilation and roof support. Methane gas is produced in coal mines and fresh air had to be forced down to us. In addition to the gas there was coal dust, which is highly explosive. In our area we sprayed limestone dust, or rock-dusting, to offset the danger of the coal dust.

Miners would get Black Lung. Nearly all miners chewed tobacco to keep the dust, they thought, from settling in their throats. Whether it helped or not, I do not know, but we thought it did, and that was important. In addition, water usually drained to the floor of the mine and had to be pumped continuously in order not to overtake us.

More than once when I was in the mine, my thoughts would flash back to the times in the hull of the ship when we were crossing in 1863. It was the same helpless feeling and fear of the dark and unknown. My fellow miners never talked about the danger or whatever fears they had in going down into the mines. Instead we would tend to boast of our dangers and that we could live through them. And live through them we did. Not a single person was ever killed in a Fairbury mine. That's a record to be proud of, and we were.

Injury is another thing. Injury was common. In the year we are reminiscing about, my brother Jerry was disabled in the mine for over six months. He was too near when a blast occurred and a large rock was propelled right into his left thigh. He was on crutches for most of a year. The work was hard and dirty and the wages were low.

So, we had idea of turning from mining to farming. At 41 I was beginning to wonder how much longer I could keep on doing this work. My cough was more persistent and my bones ached from the constant bending and the cold, damp, usually wet environment in which I worked. I wanted to be out in the sun and grow things and build up my own land to give to my sons as my father would have liked to be able to do for me. I wanted to have a piece of this land, American land, before I passed on from this world. My brother Jerry felt the same way.

Being seriously hurt in the mines got his attention like nothing else had. He wanted a change. The past year had been very difficult for him and his family. Jerry and Mary still had four children at home who ranged from Margaret at 12 down to Bridget at 7. John at 16 was already on his own, and Mary at 14 had been farmed out as a servant down the road to the Lough family. They were a good Irish family who needed Mary's help, but Jerry and Mary were sorry their circumstances made it difficult at such a young age for their own children.

Difficulty in mining, both the work and labor issues, was not limited to our experiences in Fairbury. It was more widespread. Our adopted country had great disparities between rich and poor. There were the very few Morgans and Rockefellers. The rest of us were farmers or working men and women who were basically in poverty because of reoccurring depressions. Labor was extremely slow to organize because we were confronted with the power of the businessmen and banks. Union organizers had difficulties recruiting members because of their different languages and perhaps, more important, we distrusted one another.

The Irish hated the Italians. The German the Irish. We all hated the Chinese. And almost all disregarded the Coloreds. Additionally, most of us were more concerned with getting and keeping a job, than safe working conditions and better wages. When strikes did occur, we heard about strikers being killed by hired guards or soldiers. Working in a dark mine, even though it was a nightmare, was better than dying. There was one labor incident that did get our attention.

A group of Irish coal miners in Pennsylvania had organized in the late 1850's against mine owners who they considered oppressors. The police sided with the mine owners. The Irish miners called themselves the Molly Maguires after a similar organization in Ireland that used force against agents of the landlords. The organization in Pennsylvania was infiltrated by a Pinkerton detective hired by the mine owner. The detective gathered evidence of their activities and presented it in court and 19 members of the organization were executed in 1877. The news spread like wildfire among the Irish, particularly Irish coal miners. We were being oppressed here as we had been at home. This time it was not by the English, but by our fellow Americans.

Both brother Jerry and I had been naturalized for over a decade. Was this the American dream? Could Ireland be better? Ireland was not better, she was mired in politics. Ireland continued to fight to be Irish, not English. We watched the course of politics as best we could. The important man of the time was the Irish Nationalist leader Charles Parnell. He championed Home Rule. Parnell came to the U.S. in 1878 and took back with him £70,000 to help with the causes of the agrarian agitation and obstruction of English parliamentary tactics. The Sullivans of Fairbury made a contribution to that effort. We did not have much, but whatever we had would be shared with those at home for the cause of Home Rule.

1900

Where does an adult life go? In 1900 I was 60 and one year away from being a widower. We were living in Weston, Illinois, just a few miles from my brother who remained in Fairbury. My brother and I were both farmers. I was living with my wife who was very ill. My youngest, Nora, was taking care of her mother and four of her brothers (Jerry, Con, John, and James) and myself.

As I look on that time now, it was difficult for all of us. At 23 Nora had the responsibility for the entire household of seven. She had accepted that responsibility years before when her mother's health failed. It was not only her physical health that failed, but her mental health as well. My wife had not been herself for years. None of us knew exactly what was wrong, but it was clear Honora could not function as she had in the past. The burden of the household had fallen to my youngest daughter, Nora, because her older sisters, Hannah and Mary, had moved to Chicago years before. For most of those years Nora had six men in the house, her five brothers and myself. In addition to my wife's health, we all had to deal with John's blindness.

John had been blinded about 10 years earlier when a horse kicked him in the head when he had been doing itinerant selling in Iowa with his brothers. My three sons (John, Dan, and Jerry) had tried to make a living selling tools to farmers. The accident occurred on one of these trips. They had just arrived in a small town in Iowa by train and rented a horse and buggy to start their rounds. John was harnessing the horse and it bucked and hit him square in the head. The blindness was instant. After that, most of the concern I had for my children went to John. I knew the rest could care for themselves.

For happier times, it was the work we were doing. We got out of the mines and into farming. It was still a tough existence, but one that was better than what we left. My brother Jerry already owned his own farm in 1900. I was a tenant in 1900, but my aspirations were to own land.

We moved from the mines into farming in the 1890's, when, by all counts, we should have prospered. I learned early on farming was more than being concerned about weather and crop diseases. The U.S. population was booming when we started farming. Farm mechanization, and thus efficiency, was coming into its own. Conditions working against becoming prosperous were the same forces we had seen before, the greed of the few over the many.

Eastern banks controlled credit; manufacturing monopolies controlled the price of machinery; eastern railroad trusts set freight prices; and depression after depression lowered the land values and sent crop prices downward. We farmers responded the best we could by organizing into granges and pressing for reform. We formed the Populist Party whose main purpose was to press against the excesses of business who were in league with the government. We had little success on that account except at the local and state level. McKinley's election in 1896 seemed to trumpet to all the sound of eastern money interests over the concerns of western farmers.

Pictures of Fairbury Coal Mines and Miners

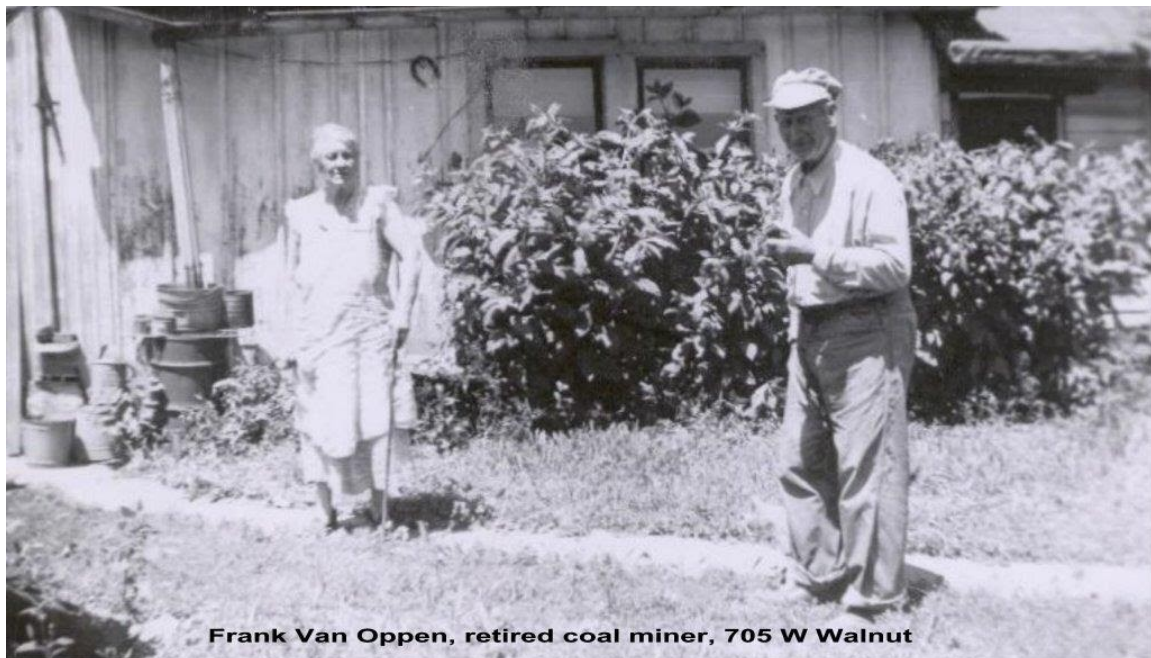




The Cooperating Coal Company was located on South 7th Street, in the Timber Ridge area.

Fairbury Coal Miner

Below is a 1950 photo of Frank VanOppen. He was a Fairbury coal miner and lived at 705 West Walnut.



Frank also worked at the Cardiff coal mine southeast of Dwight. Below is a copy of his miner's certificate issued to him in 1916.

Book No. 450

CERTIFICATE No. 44931

STATE OF ILLINOIS

State Miners' Examining Board
SUBSTITUTE

Certificate of Competency of Coal Miner

To Whom It May Concern:

This Is to Certify, That *Francis Vanopplin*
of *Cardiff* *Livingston* County, State of Illinois,
whose description is attached hereto, having made oath, and given satisfactory evidence, that he has worked in Coal Mines for not less than two
years, and having answered intelligently and correctly, the questions required by law and the Rules of this Board; and being found duly qualified,
is hereby granted this **Certificate of Competency**, and is entitled and authorized to seek and accept employment as a Coal Miner in the
Mines of the State of Illinois.

Age *37*; height *5* feet *8* inches; weight *170*; color of hair *Light*; color of eyes *Blue*
nationality *Belgian*; distinctive marks *none*
years of experience *Fourteen* *Feb 4-09*

DONE BY authority of the State Miners' Examining Board, this *26* day
of *May* 1916, in proof of which we hereby affix our seal and attach
our signatures.

[SEAL]

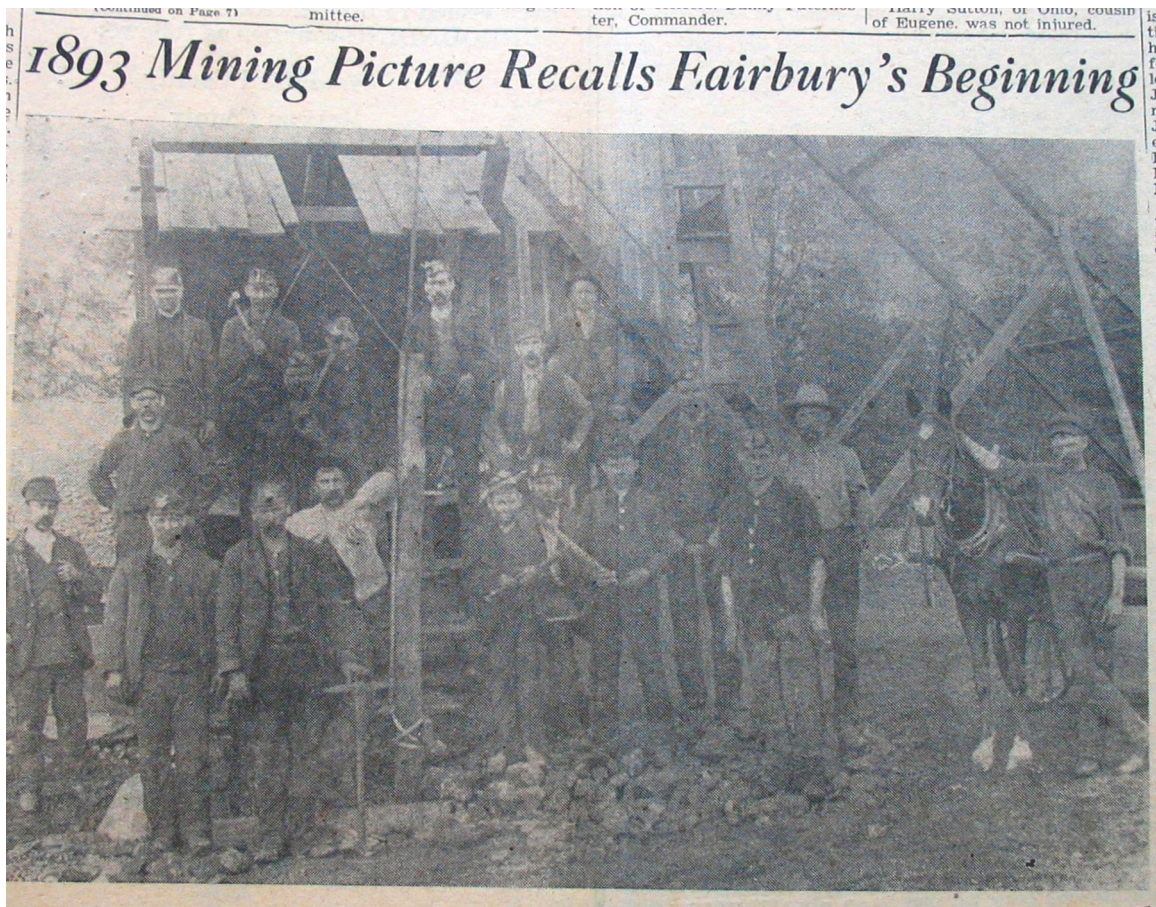
Miners' Examining Board

Edw. Mahan President.
John R. [unclear] Secretary.

(B. 206)

1893 Coal Miner's Photo

This March 27, 1952 Blade photo shows a group of Fairbury coal miners. In the story, it says the photo was taken 59 years ago, which would make the photo date 1893. The quality of the photo is very poor, but it is included because we have so few pictures of Fairbury coal miners. The names of the coal miners are legible.



A more legible list of coal miner's names is shown below, transcribed from the digitized Blade.

This is a picture of the entrance to the south mine taken one day in 1893. Grouped here are most, but not all, of the men then working the mine. Only one person in the picture is alive today. He is R.A. McAllister, the small boy fifth from the left in the bottom row. The names, and in some cases, the faces, will not be new to Fairburians. The miners of 59 years ago are as follows:

Bottom row, left to right, W. H. Williams (father-in-law of Van Wharton), Evan Williams, John Hetherington, John Jenkins (who donated land for the building of schools here, R. A. McAllister, John Monroe (builder of the first hospital building), William Price (father of Edward and Llewellyn) who later became manager of the mine, Joe Wright, and James Dawson (with horse).

Second row: Dave Price (father of William, and at that time manager), John McAllister (father of R. A.), James Loughran (father of Dillon Loughran and Mrs. E.P. Compton, and engineer of the mine), Thomas McAllister (uncle of R. A.), George Armstrong.

Top row: Bert Keyes, John Finnegan (father of Dr. H. J.), Robert Roberts, R. J. McAllister (uncle of R. A.), and James Blakesley, then night watchman.

Ex-Coal Miner Tex Carlson

The September 7, 1961, issue of the Fairbury Blade published this story.

Ex-Coal Miner Carlson Retires After 18 Yrs. as Prison Guard

Eighteen years have passed since Adolph "Tex" Carlson walked through the gates of the Pontiac branch of the Illinois State Penitentiary and accepted a position as a guard of the inmates there.

On Tuesday, August 22, at the age of 75, Tex decided to retire.

For the past nine years, he has been the guard in the prison kitchen. Oftentimes, there were from 12 to 20 inmates in the kitchen at the same time, but Carlson said that nothing ever happened which can be determined "exciting" by the public.

Quizzed if the prisoners figured the kitchen was the choice duty, Tex replied, "The inmates liked it because they always got a variety of food." The Fairbury guard has been working the night shift, from 11 pm to 7 a.m., for the past several years.

Food is always a much talked about subject in an institution such as the one at Pontiac, so the ex-coal miner was faced with the question of how good it was. "It wasn't fancy, but it was always good and well cooked," he commented.

A good many times, prison riots across the country stem from the fact that inmates claim they eat poorly prepared food. Tex told a good story concerning the food situation. "I worked for construction at one time," he said, "and I used to see men come in broke and hungry.

"The food was always good when they came into camp, but after they were around for a while and started getting money in their pockets, the food was no good anymore," Tex said.

The funny thing of it, Carlson said, was the fact that the same cook always prepared the food.

This reporter asked Tex if they had some pretty bad boys in the prison at Pontiac. The Fairburian looked up and said, "They don't put good boys in there you know. Everyone over there has been convicted of a crime even though some claim they are in there on a bum wrap."

The important thing is the inmates have been convicted of a crime by a jury, he commented.

When Tex Carlson reported to the Pontiac Prison in 1943, the population stood at 1,900, but during the summer of that year, the Army began drafting inmates by the rate of 25 men a week. Prison population dwindled to 1,100 before the war was over, but has since climbed to about 1,600.

The Army screened the prison population extremely well, Carlson said, and they did not take sex offenders, murderers, arsonists, and the like. "The men were paroled to the U.S. Army and a chaplain later told me, that as a rule, the men worked out better in the Army than outsiders," Tex noted.

In the early 1940's, a guard started for the monthly salary of \$130. Today, the top salary for a guard at Pontiac is about \$365.

One might easily say that Carlson's first love was coal mining, just as his father before him. Around 1880, Tex's father came to the United States from Sweden. He settled in Bloomington and worked in the mine there.

Tex moved to Fairbury in 1908 and started in the west mine here. He had been mining for six years prior to this. "Mines were mostly winter work," Tex said, "and when summer came along I would do something else."

Public demand for coal determined the price and coal miners were paid by the tonnage they dug. Steam engines operated the elevators and ventilating fans in the early days, but were soon replaced with electricity.

Mules were used to pull the car-loads of coal in the underground tunnels.

The west mine was 225 feet down. This writer had always heard that Fairbury mines were plagued with water problems but the ex-miner said although there was some water seepage, "the pumps did not have to be running all the time."

Also contrary to another popular rumor about Fairbury coal, Tex said, "The coal was of good quality around here, but it made a lot of ashes. The only difference was that Kentucky people and Franklin county people had good salesmen and we did not."

As everyone know, all of the Fairbury mines went under. And not because of lack of coal to mine either. "Illinois is a rich state in coal," Tex says, "because there is coal all the way from Joliet to Cairo."

Fairbury has two veins of coal, one on top of the other, but only the top vein was ever mined here. Bloomington has three different veins, Tex said. "The veins were from 4 to 5 feet thick in the mines here," the miner commented.

He was a miner from 1902 to 1943 and for awhile worked in the Decatur mine which was 1,008 feet deep.

Fortunately, Fairbury was never the site of a mine disaster. There were about 25 miners working in the west mine in 1908 when Carlson came to Fairbury from Bloomington.

Setting one other rumor straight, this writer asked the veteran miner about Fairbury being undermined with coal tunnels. "There's nothing to it," Tex said. "Perhaps the Walton mine came under a part of the west end of Fairbury, but that's all." The Walton mine was located just on the west edge of Fairbury.

How many hours a day did he work in the mine? Eight hours a day, he said.

"No coal was shipped into Fairbury when I first came to town in 1908," Tex noted, "but it seemed like after awhile, people got to thinking that things are always better than what is already here."

It wasn't long before people wanted coal shipped into town and this also helped decay the Fairbury mining structure.

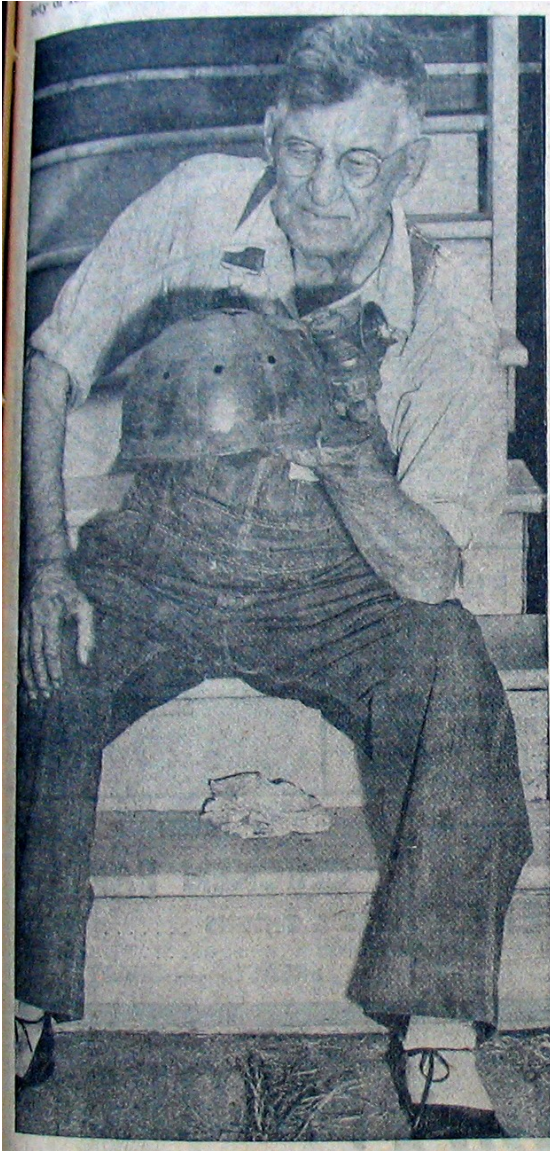
On April 15, 1920, Tex Carlson was united in marriage to Nellie Wernsmann. The couple has four children, Eugene and Bernard, both of Fairbury; Ursula, Washburn, Illinois; and Dorothy, Fairlawn, New Jersey.

Someone asked Tex how it felt to be retired, and he answered "I don't know since I haven't been retired long enough." This reporter did not ask the same question for fear of the same answer.

However, this writer did notice that Tex plans to spend some of his time on the benches in Central Park. He was enjoying a visit with some of Fairbury's old timers last week, but the contrast was that Carlson was the only one on the benches that did not chew.

When the comment was made, Tex said, "I've done enough chewing in my earlier years."

It looks like he really plans to retire, although roll-your-own cigarettes will take up some of his time.



Ex-Coal Miner Adolph "Tex" Carlson dusted off his old miner's cap and lantern and reflected over moments of Fairbury's coal history. He arrived in this city from Bloomington in 1908 and worked in the mines here until 1943. "We have good coal under Fairbury, but it seems that Kentucky and Franklin county had better salesmen," Tex told the Blade in reference to why southern Illinois and Kentucky coal was always in greater demand than Central Illinois coal. Carlson just retired last week after 18 years at the Pontiac Penitentiary as a guard. He went to Pontiac after the mines closed down.

Chapter 8

Labor Disputes

Labor disputes were very common in Fairbury. The TP&W railroad was the most famous in terms of labor-management disputes. The TP&W railroad had many strikes and was even taken over by the federal government twice. The President of the railroad was also assassinated when he was walking home in Peoria from a Bradley basketball game. Nobody was ever charged with his murder.

The Fairbury coal miners were relatively tame compared to the TP&W railroad. There were strikes from time-to-time and the mines were shut down. Below is a typical Fairbury coal mine incident:

Coal Mine in Trouble.

THE West End Coöperative coal mine at **Fairbury**, Illinois, has been closed because of a dispute between the stockholders, who are business men and miners. Owing to a lack of sufficient miners the business men wished to employ some non-union miners, but the union miners refused to sanction the plan. The business men then requested

the union miners to remove their tools. They complied, and the engineer resigned in sympathy.

From the 1908 book ***The Arena***
Volume 39

Chapter 9

Fairbury Coal Mine Locations

Total Number of Different Fairbury Coal Mines

It has proven to be a challenging task identifying exactly how many different coal mines operated in Fairbury, Illinois. Each coal mine probably had a slag pile located near the main mine shaft. Over the years, these slag piles have been removed, or covered with dirt and/or vegetation.

The March 27, 1976, Pontiac Daily Leader ran a special story giving the history of many towns around Pontiac. This included a special section on the history of Fairbury. The Fairbury article on page 63, stated that Fairbury had a total of five different coal mines.

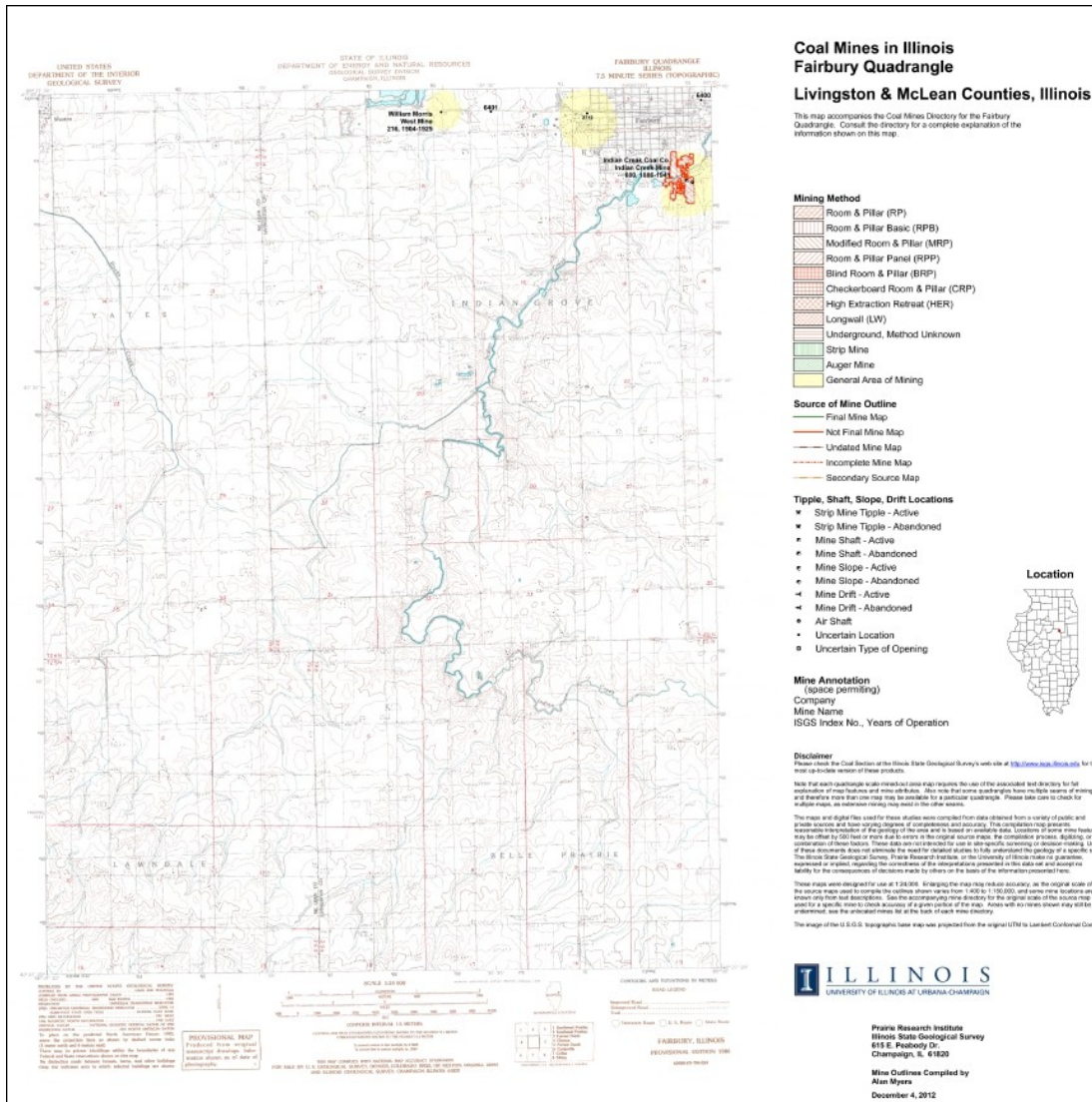
Up to five coal mines were sunk at various times, but only two were in operation by 1909, and only one by 1938. The mines played a large part in the town's early growth, as stores--and seven saloons--stayed open from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. to serve the miners.

If the miners brought prosperity to the town, they also accounted for some of the violence that characterized Fairbury's early years--and made it known as the town where no company would insure property, an early post card relates.

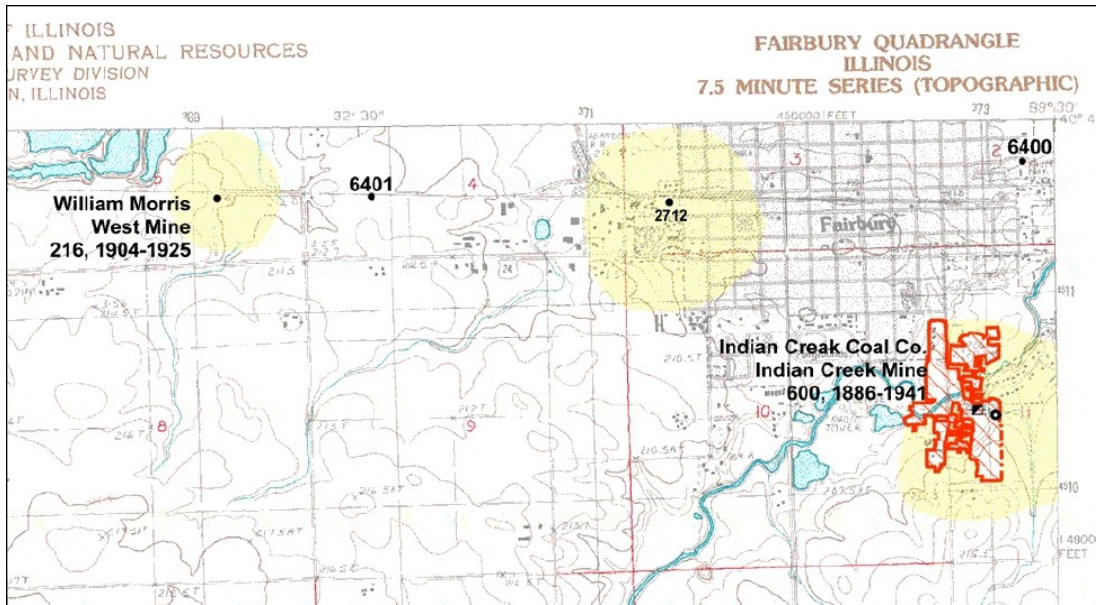
Unfortunately, the Leader doesn't identify their data source for stating there was a total of five coal mines in Fairbury. The 1909 history book states that only two mines were in operation by the 1909 publication date of the book.

Illinois State Geological Survey

This State of Illinois Department issued a 2012 thirteen-page pamphlet with all the information known to them about Fairbury area coal mines at <http://isgs.illinois.edu/sites/isgs/files/maps/coal-maps/topo-mines/fairbury.pdf>. The pages are shown below:



We will extract a close-up of this map showing just the area of interest around Fairbury:



In the map above, the ISGS is very confident on the existence and location of the three coal mines with the yellow areas indicating the boundaries of these mines.

They are not as confident on the location of the two mines identified as 6400 and 6401, as we will see later in this report.

Shaft Hill

Note that no coal mine is shown east of the current grain elevator between 9th and 10th streets on the north side of the railroad tracks. There is still a small slag pile, covered with vegetation, at this location. In the mid 1960's, the author went sledding down this hill, and at that time it was called "Shaft Hill". Below is a 2016 photo of this slag pile:



In 2018, the author updated this book, which was originally published in 2016. While checking research materials, the author realized the "Shaft Hill" coal mine was described in the 1909 Volume 2 history book.

The first coal mine was sunk in the fall of 1861 by Henry L. Marsh at a cost of \$35,000. Previous to August 22 of that year the second attempt to sink a coal shaft on this farm proved a failure on account of too much water. On the above date ground was broken the third time. After many difficulties, coal was reached January 14, 1863, measuring four feet ten inches. At that date it was the only coal shaft in central Illinois.

In 1867 the shaft was sunk still deeper to a lower vein. The mine was leased to John Watson in 1877 and he continued to operate until March 16, 1881, when the shaft was abandoned.

The sinking of the second mine east of the village was commenced in April, 1867, coal being found at a depth of 160 feet. This was owned by a stock company of which Amsbary and Jones were at the head. James Gibb was superintendent The mine was sold April 6, 1881, to Porter, Wager and Company, for \$6,000. This mine has also been abandoned.

In March, 1878, James Gibb, Robert Knight, Michael Hotchkiss and John Kirkwood, purchased at trustee's sale for \$1,000 six acres of the Marsh land, just west of the village, and also purchased the right to the coal under seventy acres in the same vicinity. At a depth of 176 feet they reached a vein four and a half feet thick at a cost of nearly \$10,000. This mine was sold on June 12, 1881, to Walton Brothers for \$10,000. They operated the mine for twenty-two years, when they sold it to a stock company. The mine was abandoned in 1906. Two mines, both run on the co-operative plan, are now in operation—one located one-half mile south of the city, the other one mile west of the city.

So, what is today referred to as "Shaft Hill" was actually the East Shaft coal mine. It was opened in April of 1867, and was closed by 1909. It's maximum years of operation was 42 years based upon these dates.

1867 Article on East Shaft Mine Being Started

The April 2, 1881, Independent Blade, carried a reprint of a July 4, 1867, story from the Fairbury Journal newspaper. It tells the story of a new coal mine being sunk in 1867.

From the local column, there is but one in this paper, we see that T.A. Jones is getting along finely with the "east shaft", the depth of 120 foot having been obtained.

East Shaft Mine Sold in 1881

The April 9, 1881, Blade carried the following story.

Sale of the East Coal Shaft

Negotiations for the sale of the east coal shaft have been pending some weeks, and within the last few days the sale has been nearing consummation. Now we are enabled to announce that Messrs. H. T. Porter and E. E. Wager, of Chicago, and Wm. Perry, of Indiana, have contracted to purchase the mine. There are a few details yet to dispose of before the trade is an absolute certainty, but it is confidently expected all obstacles to the sale will be removed in a day or two.

Should the mine change ownership, a largely increased force of men will be employed, and the business will be pushed vigorously. The price to be paid for the mine is about \$6,000.

The sales price of \$6,000 in 1881 dollars would be equivalent to \$154,707 in 2017 dollars.

Tile Factory Moved from East Shaft in 1883

Fairbury was initially swamp land. The tiling of the fields converted them from unwanted swamp land to some of the most productive farm land on the planet. Demand for clay field tile was so high, that the Straight family set up a huge tile factory on their farm. It takes a huge amount of heat to dry out the clay and form the hard hollow field tiles. At some point, the Straights must have moved their tile factory to the East Coal Shaft mine. They could take coal straight from the coal mine, and use it to heat and make their field tile.

The November 10, 1883, Fairbury Blade reported the Straights were moving their tile factory away from the East Shaft coal mine.

R.C. Straight has moved the tile factory from the east shaft in this city to El Paso, and this week began making tile at the latter place.

Losing this customer may have been one of the contributors for the East Shaft coal mine to close sometime before 1909.

East Shaft Coal Mine Sold Again in 1885

The May 14, 1885, Blade reported the following story.

Walton Bros. have succeeded to the proprietorship of the east shaft and now control both mines.

Closing Date of East Shaft Coal Mine

No Blade article could be found at this time that reported the closing date of this mine. We know it was closed by 1909 because it was reported in the 1909 Volume 2 history book as being closed.

Slag Pile One Mile West of Fairbury

There was a fair sized slag pile where the William Morris West Mine is shown on the above map until sometime in the last thirty years when it was removed.

Below is a 2016 photo of what remains of the slag pile:



The author's mother-in-law, Marilyn Wells, age 92 in 2016, remembers sledding as a child down the slag hill where mine 2712 is shown above. An October 17, 1953 Pantagraph article noted that material from an adjacent coal mine slag pile was going to be used as fill when a new building was built by the Thuro-Bilt company:

the firm.

Fairbury Firm Breaks Ground For New Plant

FAIRBURY — (PNS) — Thuro-Bilt Products Inc. broke ground Friday afternoon on a newly acquired seven acre tract on the west edge of city for a doubling of plant capacity in manufacture of prefabricated poultry houses and other similar buildings.

The new building to be 80 by 160 feet will succeed the plant already in operation nearer the center of town. A small slag pile from the old Fairbury mine nearby will provide fill material for the plant.

Bought Seven Acres

Thuro-Bilt bought the seven acres from the G. Y. McDowell property. The new plant will contain 13,000 square feet of floor space and the most modern equipment available in the prefabricated field.

The company will pre-build the new plant in its present plant and haul it in sections to the new site. The present plant employs 50 workers in two shifts a day.

To Make Various Items

Although the factory will double the plant's present output, it will have a temporary cast wall to permit future expansion. The plant will make possible the production of other items in addition to current building of prefabricated poultry houses used mainly by the Honegger companies.

roofer.

FAIRBURY—Harold Honegger, president of Thuro-Bilt, wields a spade to break ground for his firm's new plant. Others, left to right, are Lyle Huette of Thuro-Bilt; Erwin Wascher, vice president of the Honegger Company; Ed Dickey, general manager of the Honegger feed milling division; Ed Kloter, Thuro-Bilt production supervisor; Sam Honegger, chairman of the Honegger board of directors; A. P. Loomis, Honegger vice president for poultry breeding; Dean Koehl, assistant sales manager of Thuro-Bilt, and Chris Huette, Thuro-Bilt sales manager.

Hospital Notes

Deaconess

LINCOLN — (PNS) — Patients admitted: Urban Johnson, Emden; Mrs. Harrison Wilson, Alice Beams, John Lloyd Caldwell, all Lincoln.

Patients dismissed: Jean Parks, Reason: Darwin Lee Koester, Rob-

bury; David Hill, Chatsworth.

Patients dismissed: Alvin Kuerth, Forrest; Miss Marjorie Lounsbury, Danbury, Conn.; Mrs. Maxine Opperman, Piper City.

St. James

PONTIAC — (PNS) — Patients admitted: Connie Sue Watkins, Cornell; Joe Ribordy, rural Ponti-

Record Crowd At Homecoming

FARMER CITY — (PNS) — Ideal weather produced a record breaking crowd for the annual homecoming events at Moore High School Friday afternoon. Events opened with a parade of 11 floats, headed by the high

In the Dave's Supermarket Conference Room upstairs, there is a large aerial photo of the Honegger's Feed Mill on the left, and the Thuro-Bilt building on the right-hand side. The old coal mine is thought to have been just east of the Thuro-Bilt building.



Slag Pile at Timber Ridge

Around February 5, 1992, Hartzell Munz submitted a story to the Blade newspaper titled ***FROM SORGHUM TO CIDER TO SAND TO GRAVEL TO ICE TO COAL: THE HISTORY OF MUNZ FAMILY AND THE TOWN OF FAIRBURY***

One portion of this article talks about the coal mine and slag pile for the coal mine called the Indian Creek mine on the map above:

COAL MINING TOOK PLACE ON THE COOK FARM EAST OF THE MUNZ FARM. A LEASE WAS SIGNED FOR THE MINING OF COAL. THE MINE SHAFT LOCATED NEAR THE MUNZ FARM AT THE EAST END OF WHAT IS NOW THE ENTRANCE TO THE TIMBER RIDGE SUBDIVISION, SOUTH OF FAIRBURY.

THE SLAG FROM THE MINE WAS PILED OUTSIDE OF THE SHAFT WHICH IS PART OF THE HILL ENTERING THE PRESENT TIMBER RIDGE AREA.

SLAG FROM THE MINES HAD NO APPARENT USE AS COULD NOT BE USED FOR FILL BECAUSE IT NEVER PACKS DOWN SOLID AND PROHIBITED ANY VEGETATION GROWTH.

ONE STILL SEES THESE PILES AROUND. IN THOSE DAYS FARMERS WOULD COME FROM MILES AROUND IN THEIR WAGON TO GET COAL.

DURING THE COLD WEATHER IT WAS NOT UNUSUAL TO SEE 30 OR MORE WAGONS LINED UP FOR COAL.

THE MINE CLOSED AROUND 1930. THERE ARE VERY FEW RESIDENT LIVING IN FAIRBURY WHO WORKED IN THE MINES.

Below is a November 2016 photo of the entrance road to Timber Ridge subdivision, on top of the slag pile from the old coal mine:



IGS Report Continued

DIRECTORY OF COAL MINES IN ILLINOIS 7.5-MINUTE QUADRANGLE SERIES FAIRBURY QUADRANGLE MCLEAN & LIVINGSTON COUNTIES

Alan R. Myers & C. Chenoweth



2012

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This material is based upon work supported by the Illinois Mine Subsidence Insurance Fund. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois Mine Subsidence Insurance Fund.

Cover photo Track-mounted duckbill loading machine at a Peabody Coal Company mine, ca. 1915.

DISCLAIMER: The accuracy and completeness of mine maps and directories vary with the availability of reliable information. Maps and other information used to compile this mine map and directory were obtained from a variety of sources and the accuracy of some of the original information cannot be verified. Consequently, the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) cannot guarantee the mine maps are free of errors and disclaims any responsibility for damages that may result from actions or decisions based on them.

The ISGS updates the maps and directories periodically, and welcomes any new information or corrections. Please contact the Coal Section of the ISGS at the address shown on the title page of this directory, or telephone (217) 244-4610.

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INTRODUCTION

Coal has been mined in 76 counties of Illinois. More than 7,400 coal mines have operated since commercial mining began in Illinois about 1810; fewer than 30 are currently active. To detail the extent and location of coal mining in Illinois, the Illinois State Geological Survey (ISGS) has compiled maps and directories of known coal mines. The ISGS offers maps at a scale of 1:100,000 and accompanying directories for each county in which coal mining is known to have occurred. Maps at a scale of 1:24,000 and accompanying directories, such as this, are available for selected quadrangles. Contact the ISGS for a list of these quadrangles.

These larger scale maps show the approximate positions of mines in relation to surface features such as roads and water bodies, and indicate the mining method used and the accuracy of the mine boundaries. The maps are useful for locating mine boundaries relative to specific properties and for assessing the potential for subsidence in an area. Mine boundaries compiled from final mine surveys are generally shown within 200 feet of their true position. As a result of poor cartographic quality and inaccuracies in the original mine surveys, boundaries of some older mines may be mislocated on the map by 500 feet or more. Original mine maps should be consulted in situations that require precise delineation of mine boundaries or internal workings of mined areas.

This directory serves as a key to the accompanying mine map and provides basic information on the coal mines in the quadrangle. The directory is composed of two parts. Part I explains the symbols and patterns used on the accompanying map and the summary data presented for each mine. Part II numerically lists the mines in the quadrangle and summarizes the geology and production history of each mine. Total production for the mine, not the portion in the quadrangle, is given.

MINING IN THE FAIRBURY QUADRANGLE

According to the History of Livingston County, Illinois, mining was taking place near Fairbury in 1878. The Indian Creek Mine (mine index 600) operated for 55 years. Unfortunately, the source map is incomplete and all of the workings are not shown. Mining took place in the Danville Coal, which was generally over 4.5 feet thick in this area, and some longwall mining may have taken place in the Colchester Coal at both the Indian Creek Mine and West Mine (mine index 216).

PART I EXPLANATION OF MAP AND MINE SUMMARY SHEET

INTERPRETING THE MAP

The map accompanying this directory shows the location of coal mines known to be present in the quadrangle. The map, corresponding to a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle, covers an area bounded by lines of latitude and longitude 7.5-minutes apart. In Illinois, a quadrangle is approximately 6.5 miles east to west and 8.5 miles north to south, an area of about 56 square miles. The USGS generally offers one map of mines per quadrangle. In some areas where extensive mining occurred in two or more overlapping seams, separate maps are compiled for mines in each seam to maintain readability of the map.

Mine Type and Mining Method

The mine type is indicated on the map by pattern color: green represents surface mines; red and yellow represent underground mines. The red patterns are used for areas of underground mining that are documented by a primary or secondary source map. A yellow pattern is used for cases where no map of the mine workings is available, but a general area of mining can be inferred from property maps or production figures. The patterns indicate the main mining methods used in underground mines. The methods are (1) room and pillar and (2) high extraction. The method used gives some indication of the amount and pattern of coal extraction within each mined area, and has some influence on the timing and type of subsidence that can occur over a mine.

The following discussion and illustrations of mining methods are based on Guither et al. (1984).

In room-and-pillar mines, coal is removed from haulage-ways (entries) and selected areas called rooms. Pillars of unmined coal are left between the rooms to support the roof. Depending on the size of rooms and pillars, the amount of coal removed from the production areas will range from 40% to 70%.

Room and Pillar - mining is divided into six categories:

- room-and-pillar basic (RPB, fig. 1A), an early method that did not follow a preset mining plan and therefore resulted in very irregular designs;
- modified room and pillar (MRP, fig. 1B);
- room-and-pillar panel (RPP, fig. 1C);
- blind room and pillar (BRP, fig. 1D);
- checkerboard room and pillar (CRP, fig. 1E);
- room and pillar (RP), a classification used when the specific type of room-and-pillar mining is unknown.

Blind and checkerboard are the most common types of room-and-pillar mining used in Illinois today. The knowledge of room-and-pillar mining methods gives a trained engineer information on the nature of subsidence that may occur. A more extensive discussion of subsidence can be found in Bauer et al. (1993).

High-extraction These mining methods are subdivided into high-extraction retreat (HER, Fig 1F) and longwall (LW, Fig 1G, 1H). In these methods, much of the coal is removed within well defined areas of the mine. Subsidence of the surface above these areas occurs within weeks. Once the subsidence activity ceases, the potential for further movement over these areas is low; however, subsidence may continue for several years after mining.

High-extraction retreat mining is a form of room-and-pillar mining that extracts most of the coal. Rooms and pillars are developed in the panels, and the pillars are then systematically removed (fig. 1F).

In early (pre-1960) longwall mines, mining advanced in multiple directions from a central shaft (fig. 1G). Large pillars of coal were left around the shaft, but all coal was removed beyond these pillars. Miners placed rock and wooden props and cribs in the mined-out areas to support the mine roof. The overlying rock gradually settled onto these supports, thus producing subsidence at the surface. In post-1959 longwall mines, room-and-pillar methods have been used to develop the main entries of the mine and panel areas. Modern longwall methods extract 100 percent of the coal in the panel areas (fig. 1H).

SOURCE MAPS

Mine outlines depicted on the map are, whenever possible, based on maps made from original mine surveys. The process of compiling and digitizing the quadrangle map may produce errors of less than 200 feet in the location of mine boundaries. Larger errors of 500 feet or more are possible for mines that have incomplete or inaccurate source maps.

Because of the extreme complexity of some mine maps, detailed features of mined areas have been omitted. The digitized mine boundary includes the exterior boundary of all rooms or entries that were at least 80 feet wide or protruded 500 feet from the main mining area. Unmined areas between mines are shown if they are at least 80 feet wide; unmined blocks of coal within mines are shown if they are at least 400 feet on each side. Original source maps should be consulted when precise information on mine boundaries or interior features is needed.

The mine summary sheet lists the source maps used to determine each mine outline. The completeness of map sources is indicated on the map by a line symbol at the mine boundary. Source maps are organized in five categories.

Final mine map The mine outline was digitized from an original map made from mine surveys conducted within a few months after production ceased. The date of the map and the last reported production are listed on the summary sheet.

Not a final map The mine is currently active or the mine outline was made from a map based on mine surveys conducted more than a few months before production ceased. This implies the actual mined-out area is probably larger than the outline on the map. The mine summary sheet indicated the dates of source maps and the last reported production, as well as the approximate tonnage mined between these two dates (if the mine is abandoned). The summary sheet also lists the approximate acreage mined since the date of the map and, in some cases, indicates the area where additional mining may have taken place. This latter information is determined by locating on the map the active faces relative to probable boundaries of the mine property.

Undated map The source map was undated, so it may or may not be based on a final mine survey. When sufficient data are available, the probable acreage of the mined area is estimated from reported production, average seam thickness and a recovery rate comparable to other mines in the area. This information is listed in the summary sheet for the mine.

Incomplete map The source map did not show the entire mine. The summary sheet indicates the missing part of the mine map and the acreage of the unmapped area, which is estimated from the amount of coal known to have been produced from the mine.

Secondary source map The original mine map was not found so the outline shown was determined from secondary sources (e.g., outlines from small-scale regional maps published in other reports). The summary sheet describes the secondary sources.

POINTS AND LABELS

The locations of all known mine openings (shafts, slopes, and drifts) and surface mine tipples are plotted on the map. Tipples are areas where coal was cleaned, stockpiled, and loaded for shipping.

Only openings or tipples are plotted for mines without source maps. If the precise locations of these features are unknown, a special symbol is used to indicate the approximate location of the mine.

Each mine on the map is labeled with the names of the mine and operating company, ISGS mine index number, and years of operation (if known) if space permits. A seam designation is given on maps where more than one seam was mined. For a mine that operated under more than one name, only the most recent name is generally given. When a mine changed names or ownership shortly before closing, an earlier name is listed. All company and mine names are listed on the mine summary sheet in the directory, under the production history segment.

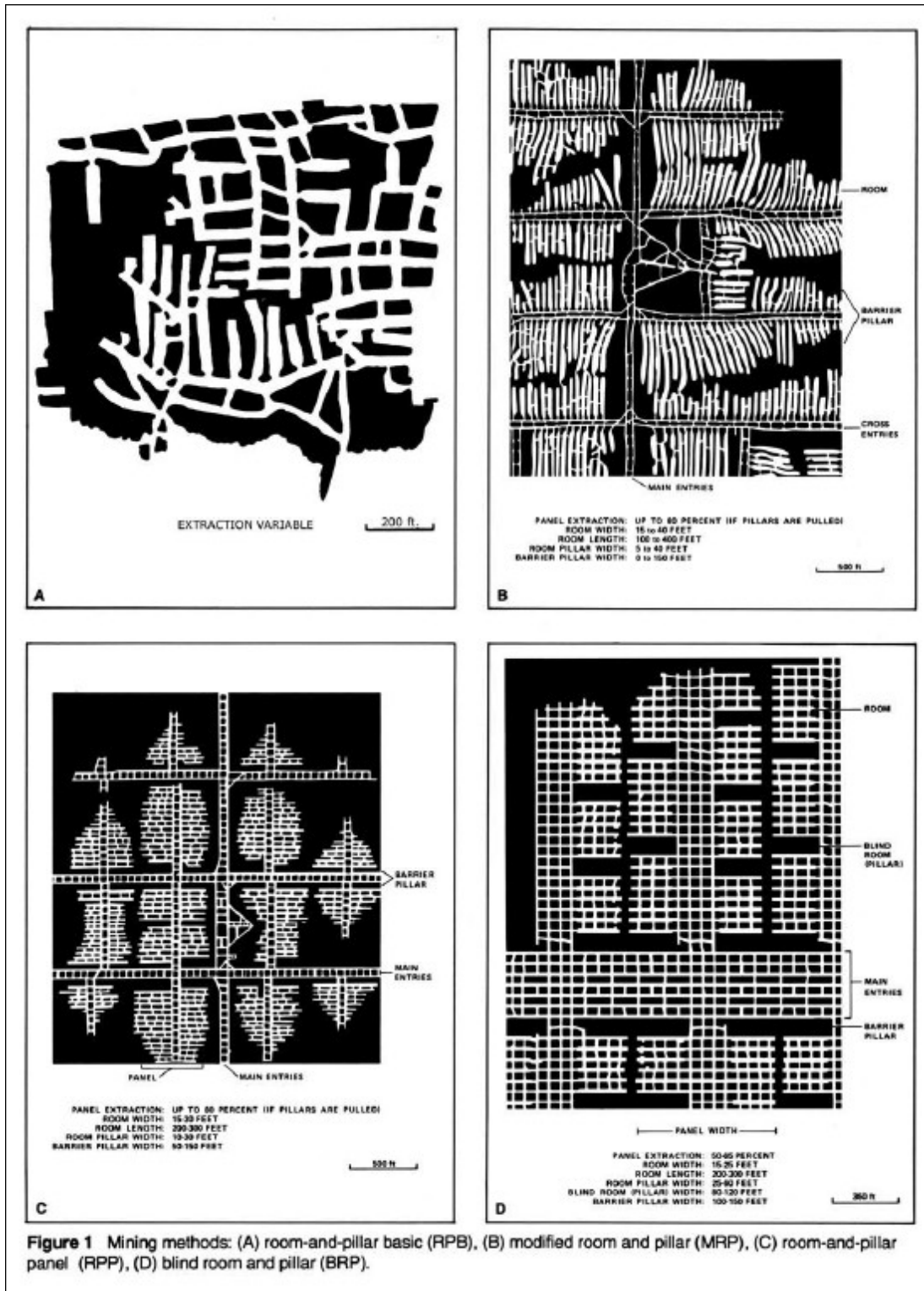


Figure 1 Mining methods: (A) room-and-pillar basic (RPB), (B) modified room and pillar (MRP), (C) room-and-pillar panel (RPP), (D) blind room and pillar (BRP).

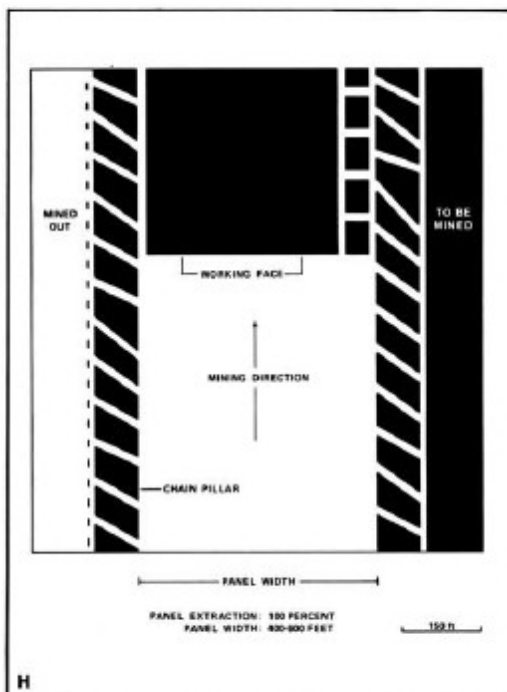
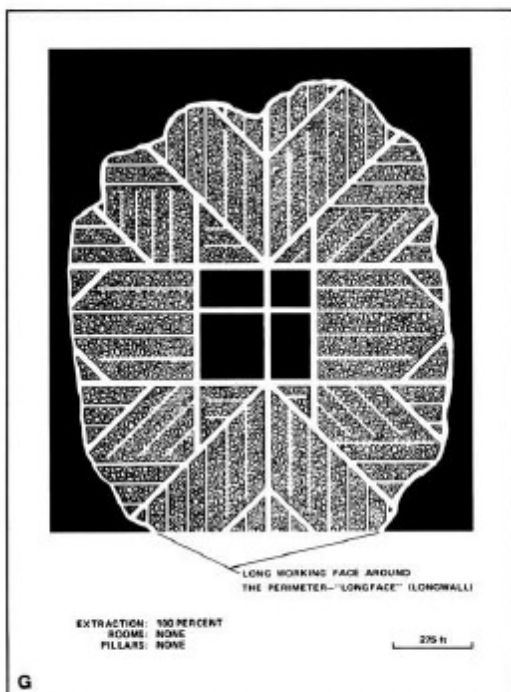
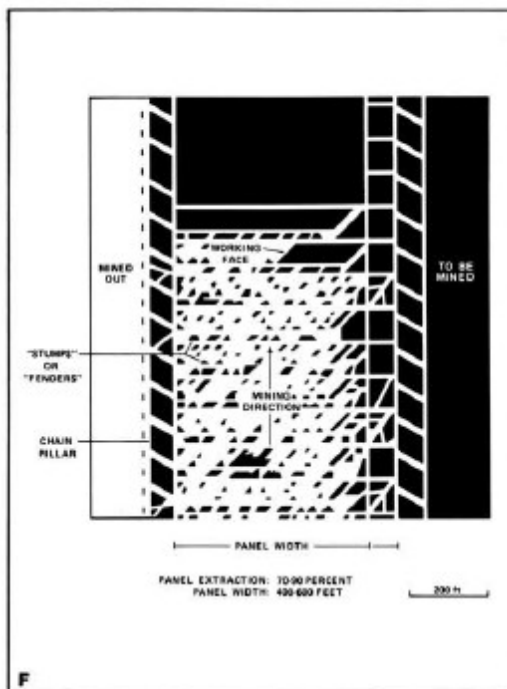
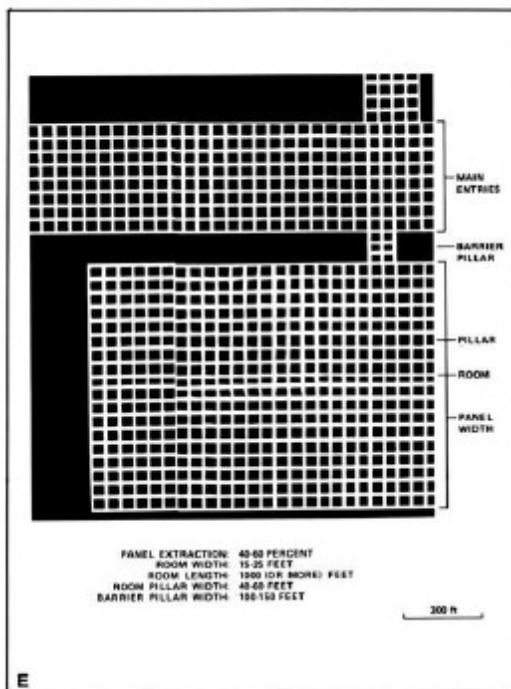


Figure 1 (cont.) Mining methods: (E) checkerboard room and pillar (CRP), (F) high extraction retreat (HER), (G) early (pre-1960) longwall, (H) post-1959 longwall

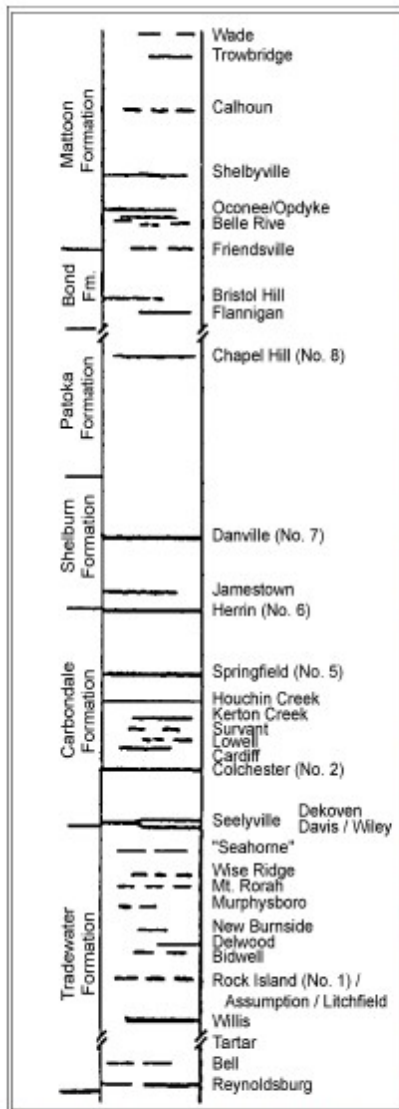


Figure 2 Generalized stratigraphic section, showing approximate vertical relations of coals in Illinois.

INTERPRETING A MINE SUMMARY SHEET

The mine summary sheet is arranged numerically by mine index number. Index numbers are shown on the map and in the mine listing. The mine summary sheet provides the following information (if available).

Company and mine name The last company or owner of the mine is used, unless no production was recorded for the last owner. In that case, the penultimate owner is listed. Mines often have no specific name; in these cases, the company name is also used as the mine name.

Type *Underground* denotes a subsurface mine in which the coal was reached through a shaft, slope, or a drift entry. *Surface* denotes a surface, open pit or strip mine.

Total mined-out acreage shown The total acreage of the mined area mapped, including any acreage mined on adjacent quadrangles, is calculated from the digitized outline of the mine. The acreage of large barrier pillars depicted on the map is excluded from the mined-out acreage. Small pillars not digitized are included in the acreage calculation. If the mine outline is not based on a final mine map, the acreage is followed by an estimate of additional acres that may have been mined. The estimate is determined from reported mine production, approximate thickness of the coal, and recovery rates calculated from nearby mines that used similar mining methods.

SHAFT, SLOPE, DRIFT OR TIPPLE LOCATIONS

Shaft, slope, drift, or tipple locations Locations of all known former entry points to underground mines or the location of coal cleaning, tipple, and shipping equipment used by the mine's facility are listed. The location is described in terms of county, township and range (Twp-Rge), section, and location within the section by quarters. NE SW NW, for instance, would describe the location in the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter. When sections are irregular in size, the quarters remain the same size and are oriented (or "registered") from the southeast corner of the section. Approximate footage from the section lines (FEL = from east line, FNL = from north line, for example) is given when that information is known; this indicates a surveyed location and is not derived from maps. Entry points are also plotted on the map and coded for the type of entry or tipple. A mine opening may have had many purposes during the life of the mine. Old hoist shafts are often later used for air and escape shafts; this information is included in the directory when known. The tipple for underground mines was generally located near the main shaft or slope. At surface mines, coal was sometimes hauled to a central tipple several miles from the mine pit.

GEOLOGY

Seam(s) mined The name of the coal seam(s) mined is listed, if known. If multiple seams were mined, they are all listed, although the mined-out area for each seam may be shown on separate maps. Figure 2 shows the stratigraphic section of the coal-bearing interval in Illinois, and the vertical relations among the coals.

Depth The depth to the top of the seam in the vicinity of the shaft is listed, if known. The depth is determined from notes made by geologists who visited the mine during its operation or from drill hole data in ISGS files. Depth generally varies little over the extent of a mine; however, reported depths for an individual mine may vary. Depth for surface-mined coals varies, and is usually represented as a range.

Thickness The approximate thickness of the mined seam is shown, if known. Thickness also comes from notes of geologists who visited the mine during its operation or from borehole data in ISGS files. Minimum, maximum, and average thicknesses are given when this information is available.

Mining method The principal mining method used at the mine (figs. 1A-H) is listed. See the mining methods section at the beginning of this directory for a discussion of this parameter.

Geologic problems reported Any known geologic problems, such as faults, water seepage, floor heaving, and unstable roof, encountered in the mine are reported. This information is from notes made by ISGS geologists who visited the mine, or from reports by mine inspectors published by the Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals, or from the source map(s). Geologic problems are not reported for active mines.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Production history Tons of coal produced from the mine by each mine owner are totaled. When the source map used for the mine outline is not a final mine map, the tonnage produced since the date of the map is identified. For mines that extend into adjacent quadrangles, the tonnage reported includes areas mined in adjacent quadrangles.

SOURCE OF DATA

Source map This section lists information about the map(s) used to compile the mine outline and the locations of tipples and mine openings. In some cases more than one source map was used. For example, a map drawn before the mine closed may provide better information on original areas of the mine than a later map. When more than one map was used, the bibliography section explains what information was taken from each source.

Date The date of the most recent mine survey listed on the source map is reported.

Original scale The original scale of the source map is listed. Many maps are photo-reductions and are no longer at their original scale. The original scale gives some indication of the level of detail of the mine outline and the accuracy of the mine boundary relative to surface features. Generally, the larger the scale, the greater the accuracy and detail of the mine map. Mine outlines taken from source maps at scales smaller than 1:24,000 may be highly generalized and may well be inaccurately located with respect to surface features.

Digitized scale The scale of the digitized map is reported. The scale may be different from that of the original source map. In many cases the digitized map was made from a photo-reduction of the original source map, or the source map was not in a condition suitable for digitizing and the mine boundaries were transferred to another base map.

Map type Source maps are classified into five categories to indicate the probable completeness of the map. See discussion of source maps in the previous section.

Annotated bibliography Sources that provide information about the mine are listed, with the data taken from each source. Some commonly used sources are described below. Full bibliographic references are given for all other sources. Unless otherwise noted, all sources are available for public inspection at the ISGS.

Coal Reports Published since 1881, these reports contain tabular data on mine ownership, production, employment, and accidents. Some volumes include short descriptions made by mine inspectors of physical features and conditions in selected mines.

Directory of Illinois Coal Mines This source is a compilation of basic data about Illinois coal mines, originally gathered by ISGS staff in the early 1950s. Sources used for this directory are undocumented, but they are primarily Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals annual reports, ISGS mine notes, and coal company officials.

ENR Document 85/01, Guither, H. D., J. K. Hines, and R. A. Bauer, 1985 The Economic Effect of Underground Mining Upon Land Used for Illinois Agriculture: Illinois Department of Energy and Natural Resources Document 85/01, 185 p.

Microfilm map The U.S. Bureau of Mines maintains a microfilm archive of mine maps. A microfilm file for Illinois is available for public viewing at the ISGS.

Mine notes ISGS geologists have visited mines or contacted mine officials throughout the state since the early 1900s. Notes made during these visits range from brief descriptions of the mine location to long narratives (including sketches) of mining conditions and geology.

Federal Land Bank of St. Louis, Preliminary Reports on Subsidence Investigations Mining engineers working for the Federal Land Bank of St. Louis mapped areas of subsidence due to coal mining in the early 1930s. These reports often include county maps of mine properties with mined-out areas including shaft locations, as well as subsidence areas.

REFERENCES

Bauer, R. A., B. A. Trent, and P. B. Dumontelle, 1993, Mine Subsidence in Illinois: Facts for the Homeowner Considering Insurance, Illinois State Geological Survey, Environmental Geology Note 144, 16p.

Guither, H. D., J. K. Hines, and R. A. Bauer, 1985, The Economic Effects of Underground Mining Upon Land Used for Illinois Agriculture, Illinois Department of Energy and Natural Resources Document 85/01, 185p.

Le Baron, W., 1878, History of Livingston County, Illinois, Chicago, 898p.

PART II DIRECTORY OF MINES IN THE FAIRBURY QUADRANGLE

MINE SUMMARY SHEETS

A summary sheet on the geology and production history of each mine in the Fairbury Quadrangle is provided. These summary sheets are arranged numerically by mine index number. Consult Part I for a complete explanation of the data listed in the summary sheet.

Mine Index 216

William Morris, West Mine

Type: Underground Total mined-out acreage shown: None; production indicates approximately 100 acres were mined.

SHAFT, SLOPE, DRIFT or TIPPLE LOCATIONS

Type	County	Township-Range	Section	Quarters-Footage
Main shaft *	Livingston	26N 6E	5	SW SE

* An escape shaft was completed in 1907, but no source maps are available to show the location and only the main shaft is shown on the accompanying map.

GEOLOGY

Seam(s) Mined	Depth (ft)	Thickness (ft)			Mining Method
		Min	Max	Avg	
Danville	65	3.0	6.0	5.0	RP
Colchester **	225-246				LW

** The 1908 Coal Report indicated that longwall mining was practiced, but previous and later years only indicated one seam with room and pillar mining.

Geologic Problems Reported: The gray shale roof was 20 to 30 feet thick and very hard to keep up. Some rolls were present. The coal contained two clay bands, one a blue band ½ inch thick that had a substantial amount of pyrite, and a lower 3 inch band of clay that was from 3 to 12 inches above the floor. The lower clay band was continuous throughout the mine. Pyrite was also present in lenses 1 to 2 inches thick and 8 to 12 inches across.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Company	Mine Name	Years	Production (tons)
Johnson Cooperative Coal Company	Johnson No. 1	1904-1905	9,278
West End Coal Company	West End	1905-1906	15,335
Fairbury West End Coal Company	West End	1906-1908	39,235
Fairbury Coal Company	West	1908-1925	367,035
William Morris ***	West	1925-1925	3,684
			434,567

*** May also have been known as Morris & Walker

Last reported production: 1925

SOURCES OF DATA

Source Map	Date	Original Scale	Digitized Scale	Map Type
Mine notes (G. H. Cady)	8-12-1919	1:62500	1:62500	Secondary source

Annotated Bibliography (data source, brief description of information)

Coal Reports - Production, ownership, years of operation, mine type, seams, mining method.

Directory of Illinois Coal Mines (Livingston County) - Mine names, mine index, ownership, years of operation.

Mine notes (Livingston County) - Shaft location, depth, thickness, geologic problems.

Mine Index 600**Indian Creek Coal Company, Indian Creek Mine**

Type: Underground Total mined-out acreage shown: 50 Production indicates that an additional 4 acres were mined after the map date. However, the area shown on the accompanying map does not match reported production. The eastern portion of the map is incomplete, and production indicates an additional 100 acres were mined.

SHAFT, SLOPE, DRIFT or TIPPLE LOCATIONS

Type	County	Township-Range	Section	Quarters-Footage
Main shaft	Livingston	26N 6E	11	NW NW SW
Air shaft	Livingston	26N 6E	11	NE NW SW

GEOLOGY

Seam(s) Mined	Depth (ft)	Thickness (ft)			Mining Method
		Min	Max	Avg	
Danville	166-170	3.75	4.33	4.0	MRP

Geologic Problems Reported: A few faults were found, associated with horsebacks. The roof varied, often 0 to 30 feet of clayey shale, or 18 feet of sandstone. In some places, the roof was black shale. The seam contained numerous pyrite bands. The underlay heaved a little.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Company	Mine Name	Years	Production (tons)
Fairbury Cooperative Coal Company	Fairbury	1886-1895	103,530
Cooperative Coal Company	Fairbury	1895-1909	142,809
Fairbury Miners Cooperative Coal Company	Fairbury	1909-1936	329,717
Indian Creek Coal Company	Indian Creek	1936-1939	19,818
Indian Creek Coal Company	Indian Creek	1939-1941	14,002 *
			609,876

* Production after map date

Last reported production: 1941

SOURCES OF DATA

Source Map	Date	Original Scale	Digitized Scale	Map Type
Microfilm, document 352531	7-22-1926	1:1200	1:1986	Not final **
Microfilm, document 352528	7-1939	1:1200	1:1572	Not final

** Incomplete in the eastern portion of the mine

Annotated Bibliography (data source, brief description of information)

Coal Reports - Production, ownership, years of operation, mine type, mining method.
 Directory of Illinois Coal Mines (Livingston County) - Mine names, mine index, ownership, years of operation.
 Mine notes (Livingston County) - Shaft location, depth, thickness, geologic problems.
 Microfilm map, document 352531, reel 03139, frame 254 - Shaft locations, mine outline, mining method.
 Microfilm map, document 352528, reel 03139, frame 250 - Shaft locations, mine outline (southwestern part).

Mine Index 2712**Beggs, Davis & Company, Walton Mine**

Type: Underground Total mined-out acreage shown: None; production indicates approximately 150 acres were mined.

SHAFT, SLOPE, DRIFT or TIPPLE LOCATIONS

Type	County	Township-Range	Section	Quarters-Footage
Main shaft	Livingston	26N 6E	3	SW SW

GEOLOGY

Seam(s) Mined	Depth (ft)	Thickness (ft)			Mining Method
		Min	Max	Avg	
Danville	180-195			4.5-5.0	RP
Colchester	305			2.33	LW

Geologic Problems Reported:

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Company	Mine Name	Years	Production (tons)
Walton Brothers	Central	pre1881-1884	72,400
Fairbury Coal Company	Central	1884-1886	49,887
Walton Brothers	Central	1886-1902	464,343
Beggs, Davis & Company	Walton	1902-1904	41,030
			627,660

Last reported production: 1904

SOURCES OF DATA

Source Map	Date	Original Scale	Digitized Scale	Map Type
Sanborn-Perris Map Co., Fairbury	1892 & 1898	Unknown	1:24000 *	Secondary source

* The mine location was plotted on a 1:24000 USGS topographic map from the mine location description and digitized.

Annotated Bibliography (data source, brief description of information)

Coal Reports - Production, ownership, seam, depth, thickness, mining method, years of operation.
 Directory of Illinois Coal Mines (Livingston County) - Mine names, mine index, ownership, years of operation.
 Sanborn-Perris Map Company, Limited, New York, map of Fairbury & vicinity - Shaft location (general).

OTHER MINES SHOWN ON FAIRBURY QUADRANGLE

Mine Index 6400, Amsburg & Jones SW 2-T26N-R6E, shaft source: History of Livingston County, Illinois (1878)
Mine Index 6401, H. L. March SW 4-T26N-R6E, shaft source: History of Livingston County, Illinois (1878)

MINES WHOSE LOCATIONS ARE NOT KNOWN, FAIRBURY QUADRANGLE

The locations of the following mines are unknown, but the production tonnage, operating names, and nearest town were reported in the Annual Coal Reports. The operators listed below mined in or near the Fairbury Quadrangle. The information shown is similar to that presented on the summary sheets in the previous pages of this directory. The first item is the name the mine operated under as listed in the Coal Report, then the years the mine reported. If no physical data are available, the next item listed is the total tons produced by the mine. If physical data are available, the order of presentation is as follows: type of opening for the mine (drift, slope or shaft), depth of coal in feet, and thickness of coal in feet.

The total tons mined by these unlocated mines is 70,000 (all underground mined), which would represent approximately 14 to 30 acres, depending on the recovery factor, mining method, and numerous other factors. (Note: 1 square mile = 640 acres)

FAIRBURY

Porter, Wager & Company, pre1881-1884	70,000 tons
Hamlin (H. E.), 1884-1885	<u>not reported</u>
shaft, Springfield & Colchester Coals, 180 & 310, 4.5-4.76 & 2.75-3.0	70,000 tons

FORREST

1898 - Shaft dug to 72 feet, abandoned because of water and 'difficult nature of the ground'. The timbers were too light and collapsed.

INDEX OF MINES IN THE FAIRBURY QUADRANGLE

Amsburg & Jones	12
Beggs, Davis & Company	11
Central Mine	11
Cooperative Coal Company	10
Davis (Beggs, Davis & Company)	11
Fairbury Coal Company	9, 11
Fairbury Cooperative Coal Company	10
Fairbury Miners Cooperative Coal Company	10
Fairbury West End Coal Company	9
Hamlin (H. E.)	12
Indian Creek Coal Company	10
Johnson Cooperative Coal Company	9
Jones (Amsburg & Jones)	12
March (H. L.)	12
Morris (William)	9
Morris & Walker	9
Porter, Wager & Company	12
Wager (Porter, Wager & Company)	12
Walker (Morris & Walker)	9
Walton Brothers	11
West End Coal Company	9
West Mine	9

Total Coal Production from Fairbury

If we use the data above from this report, we can calculate how many tons of coal were mined from Fairbury coal mines:

	Tons Mined
	434,567
	609,876
	627,660
	70,000
	=====
Total	1,742,103

The ISGS data indicates that a total of 1.742 million tons of coal was mined from Fairbury coal mines.

Summary of Main Fairbury Coal Mines

The Fairbury coal mines were each bought and sold many times. It is extremely difficult to refer to a mine site by a particular name, because the names changed so many times. Using the ISGS report above, here is a summary of the name changes for the three main coal mines they include in their report (the East Shaft is not included in their report).

Fairbury History

(3) Fairbury Coal Companies

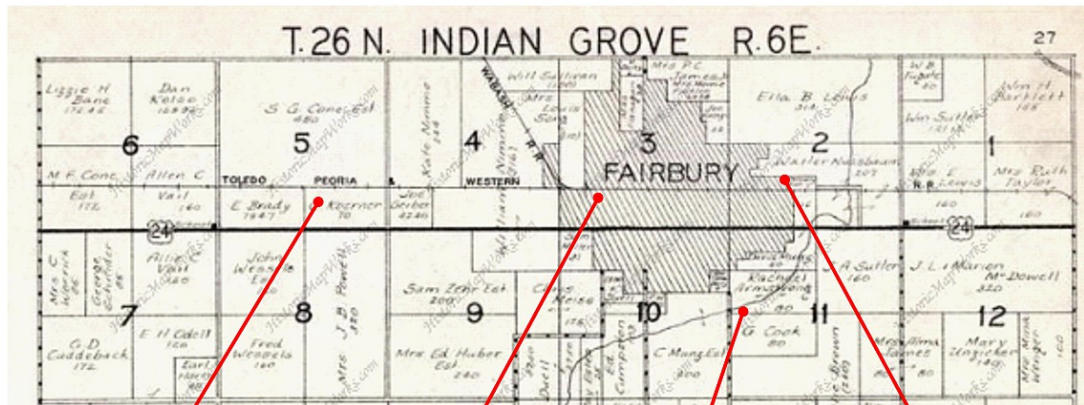
DIRECTORY OF COAL MINES FOR LIVINGSTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS (September 2013)												
ISGS INDEX	COMPANY NAME	MINE NAME	MINE NO.	MINE TYPE	METHOD	YEARS OPERATED	SEAM MINED	COUNTY	LOCATION	TWP	RGE	SEC
216	JOHNSON CO-OP COAL CO.	JOHNSON	1	SHAFT		1904-1905	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	5	
216	WEST END COAL CO.	WEST END		SHAFT		1905-1906	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	5	
216	FAIRBURY WEST END COAL CO.	WEST END	1	SHAFT		1906-1908	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	5	
216	FAIRBURY COAL CO.	WEST	1	SHAFT		1908-1925	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	5	
216	MORRIS (WILLIAM)	WEST		SHAFT		1925-1925	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	5	
600	FAIRBURY CO-OP COAL CO.	FAIRBURY		SHAFT	MRP	1886-1895	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	11	
600	CO-OPERATIVE COAL CO.	FAIRBURY		SHAFT	MRP	1895-1909	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	11	
600	FAIRBURY MINERS CO-OP COAL	FAIRBURY		SHAFT	MRP	1909-1936	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	11	
600	INDIAN CREEK COAL CO.	INDIAN CREEK		SHAFT	MRP	1936-1941	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	11	
2712	WALTON BROTHERS	CENTRAL		SHAFT	RP	1881-1884	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	3	
2712	FAIRBURY COAL CO.	CENTRAL		SHAFT	RP	1884-1886	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	3	
2712	WALTON BROTHERS	CENTRAL		SHAFT	RP	1886-1902	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	3	
2712	BEGGS, DAVIS & CO.	WALTON		SHAFT	RP	1902-1904	DANVILLE	LIVINGSTON	26N	6E	3	

-Many different names for these 3 coal mines over the years.

-Indian Creek coal company open the longest at 45 years.

The map below summarizes the location of the three main coal mines in Fairbury as noted in the ISGS report. One name was arbitrarily chosen for each of the three main coal mines. The East Shaft mine is also included.

(4) Fairbury Coal Companies



Fairbury Coal Company
26N-6E-5
1904-1925

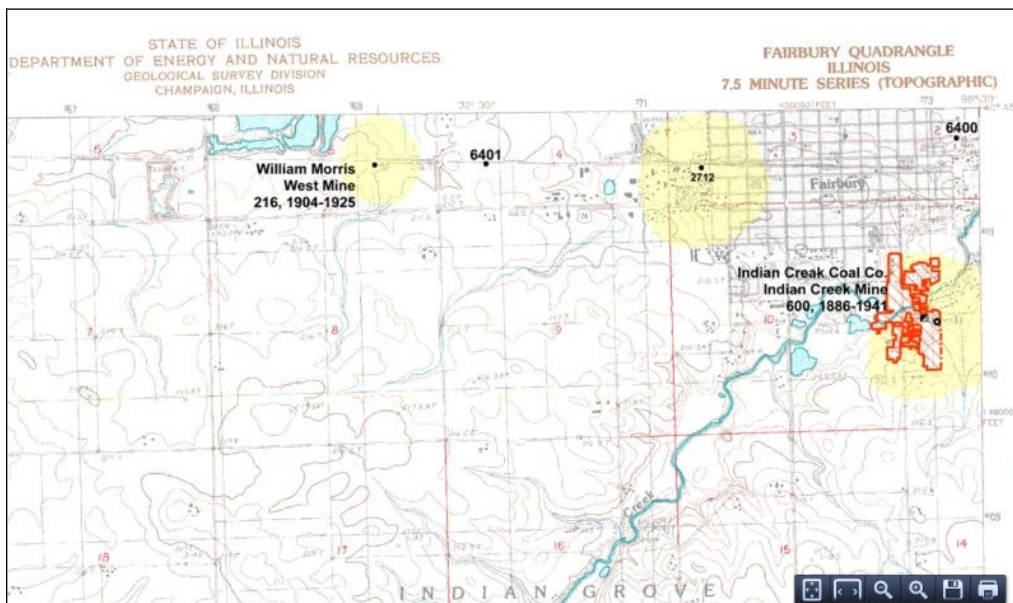
Walton Brothers Coal Mine
26N-6E-3
1881-1904

Indian Creek
Coal Company
26N-6E-11
1886-1941

East Shaft
26N-6E-2
1867-1909

What Parts of Fairbury are Located on Top of Coal Mine Tunnels?

The ISGS 2012 report shows the approximate area mined in yellow, for the three main Fairbury coal mines (this does not include the East Shaft mine).

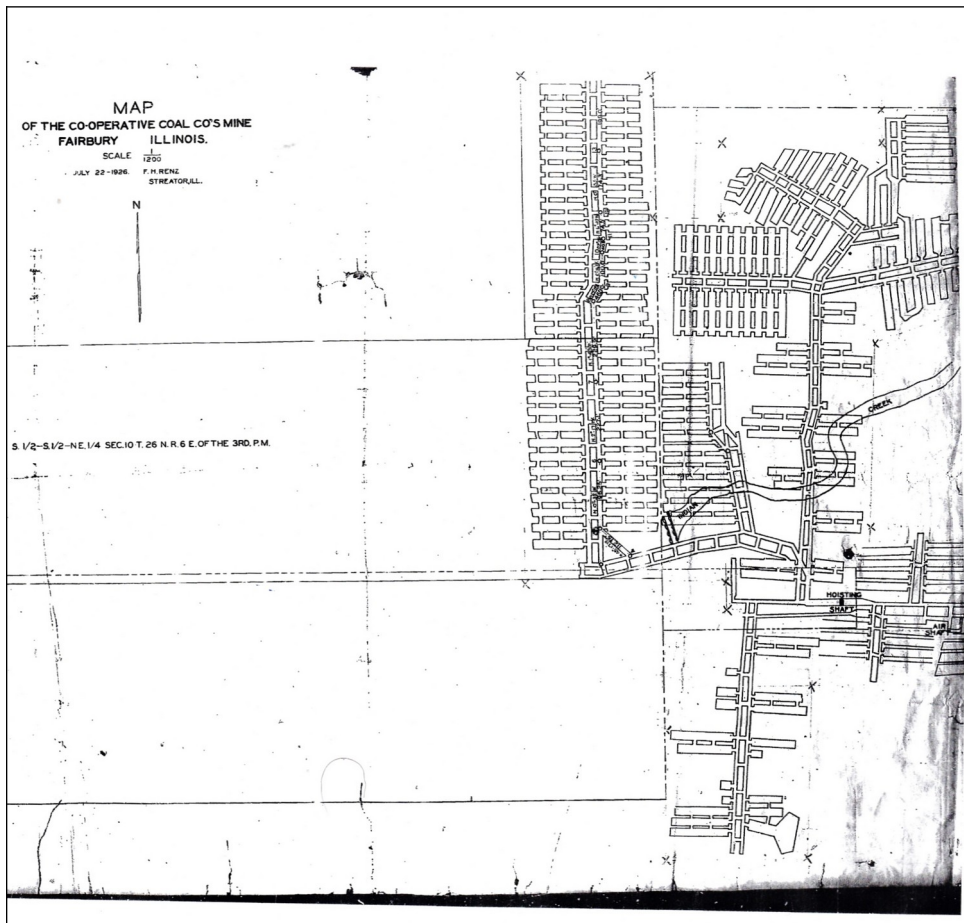


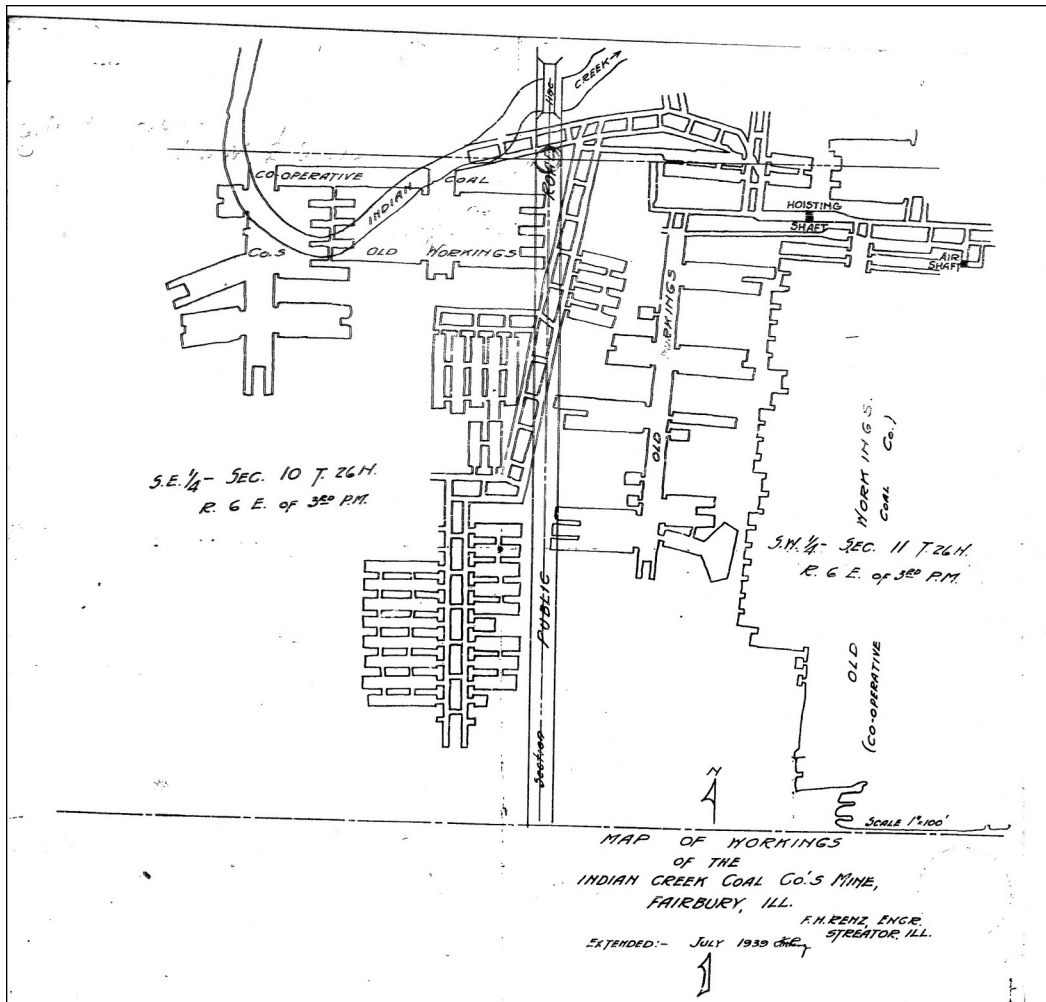
If no tunnel maps were available to the ISGS, they estimated the area mined. If you know how many tons of coal were removed, and the average vein depth was about 5 feet, you can estimate the area mined.

Since the East Shaft coal mine was in operation for a maximum of 42 years, it is likely there are tunnels under the Fairbury homes in the 9th and 10th street areas on the railroad track where this mine was located.

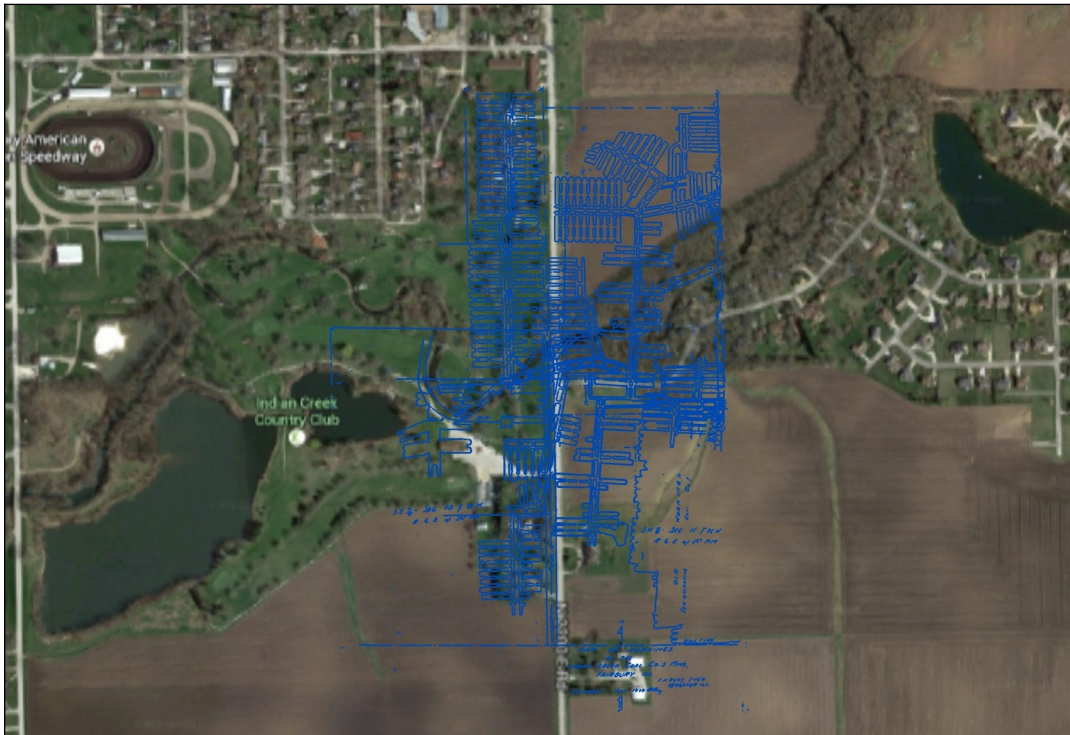
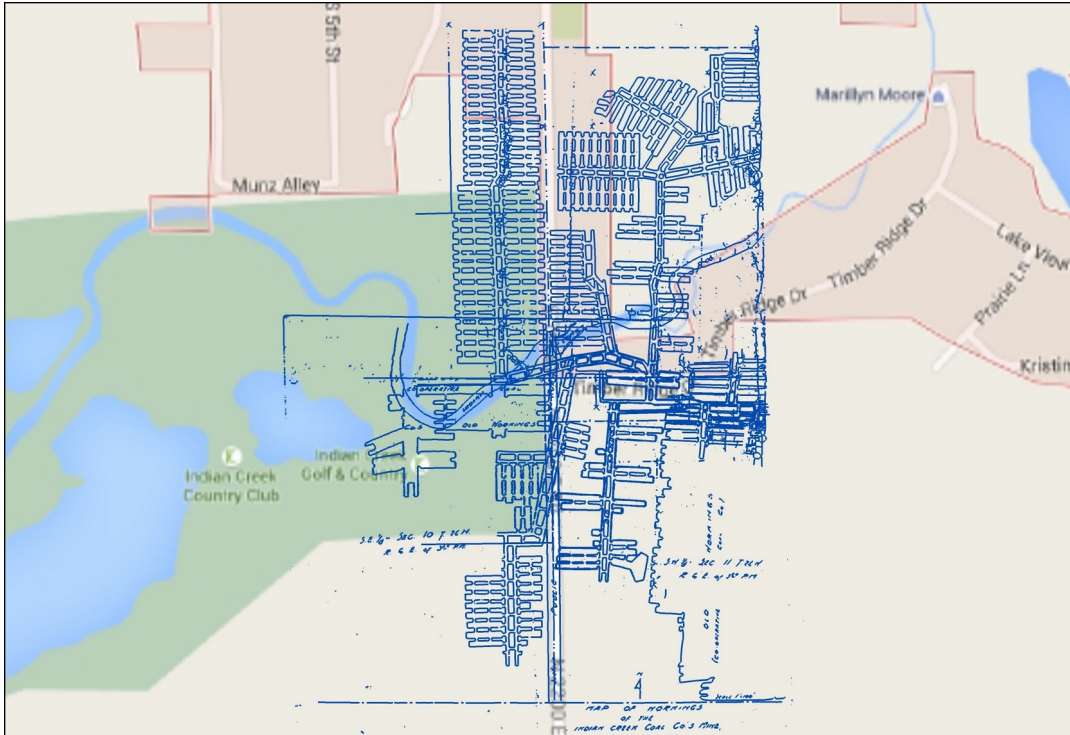
Actual Tunnel Maps for Fairbury Coal Mines

The only Fairbury coal mine that we have tunnel maps for is the coal mine that was located at the entrance to the Timber Ridge subdivision. A copy of the tunnel maps of this mine are on two micro-film cards at the old Livingston County Courthouse in Pontiac. The 1926 slide shows the north half of the tunnels while the 1939 slides shows the south half of the tunnels. This mine closed in 1941, so the tunnel maps should be fairly accurate:





Using Google Maps, we can combine the two old tunnel maps, then overlay them on maps of Fairbury. These are shown below.

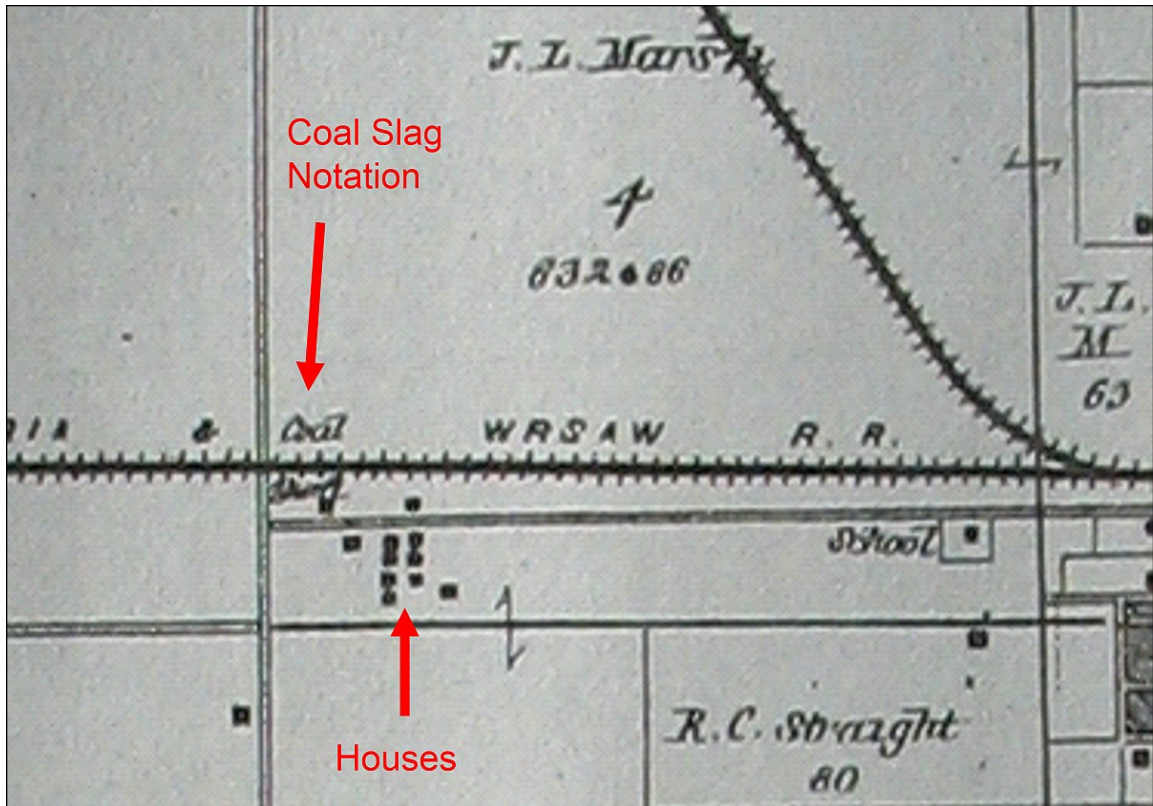


At this time, we do not know of any more tunnel maps for the other Fairbury coal mines. It is possible the ISGS has some in their Springfield archives.

The Pontiac Library has a re-printed book with certain 1871 township maps. This book does have a map showing the coal mine slag pile located west of Fairbury.



Note that this map shows a separate road running from Fairbury to the coal slag pile. It also shows houses by the slag pile. Enlarging this area gives the following.



1897 Book Information

In an 1897 coal mining book is the following information:

FAIRBURY, Livingston Co. Pop. 2,324. M.O. Tel. Ry. 855; 913.
B.Coal—Fairbury Co-operative Coal Co. Shaft, 165 ft. 12,000 tons; 220 days; 20 employes. Steam.
B.Coal—Walton Bros. Shaft, 190 ft. 17,000 tons; 200 days; 45 employes. Steam.

1899 Book Information

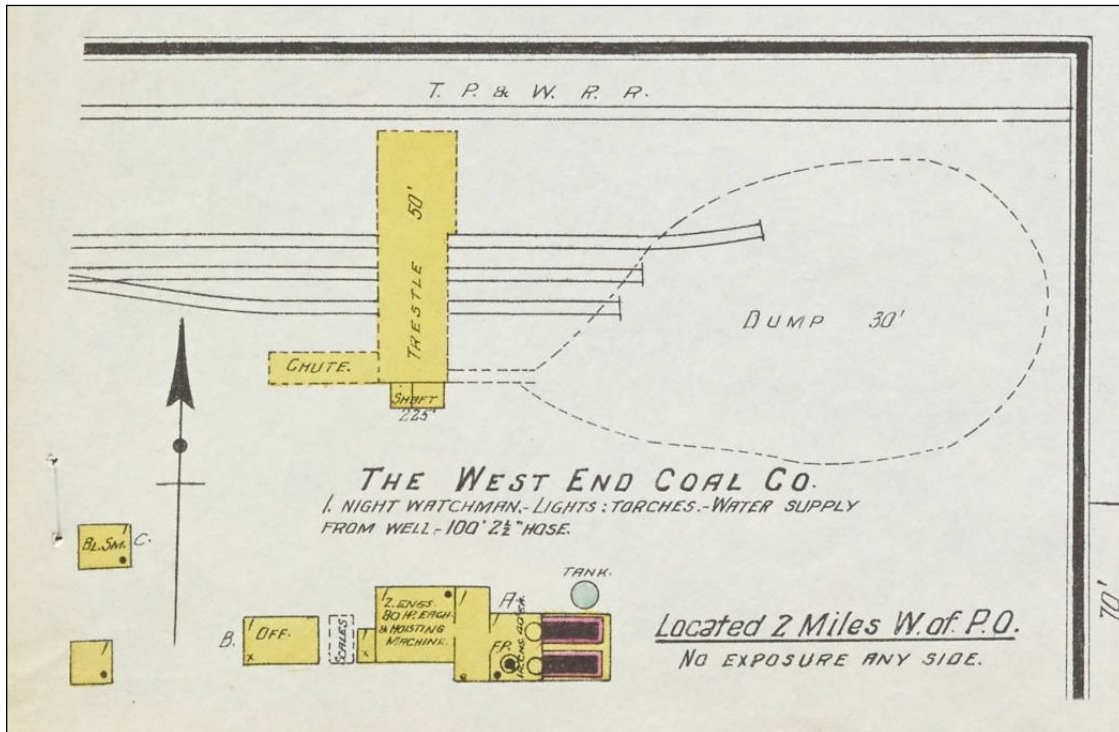
FIRST DISTRICT.					
<i>Statement of the Reports of the State Inspectors of Mines of the Inspection of Mines, the Amount of Fees Charged and Paid for the Year Ending July 1, 1898.</i>					
Date of Inspection.	Name of Firm, Company or Person Operating Mine.	Location of Mine.	Number of men employed.	Inspection fee charged.	Inspection fee paid.
Oct. 26, 1897	Coöperative Coal Co. ....	..	30	6 00	24 00
Jan. 14, 1898	.. ..	..	30	6 00	..
April 13, 1898	.. ..	..	24	6 00	..
Aug. 6, 1897	Coöperative Coal Co.	Fairbury	16	6 00	30 00
Nov. 15, 1897	.. ..	..	11	6 00	..
Feb. 1, 1898	.. ..	..	16	6 00	..
May 9, 1898	.. ..	..	17	6 00	..
Aug. 6, 1897	Walton Bros.	Fairbury	38	6 00	..
Aug. 28, 1897	.. ..	..	13	6 00	..
Nov. 15, 1897	.. ..	..	36	6 00	..
Feb. 1, 1898	.. ..	..	45	6 00	..
May 9, 1898	.. ..	..	33	6 00	..

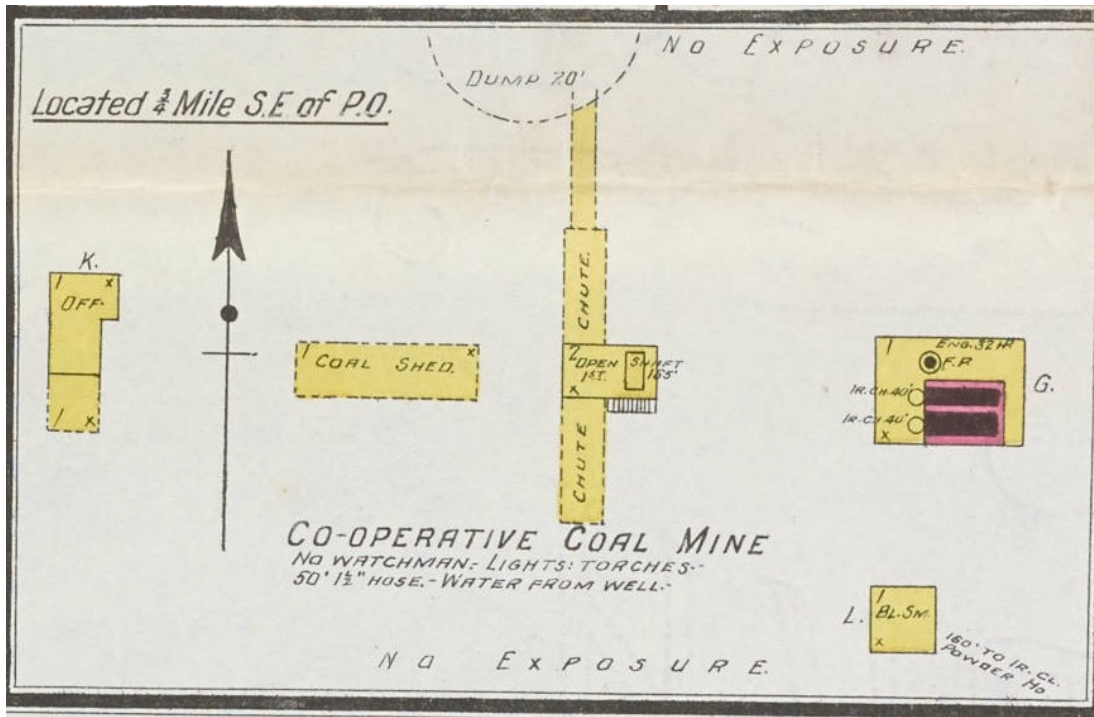
From the 1899 book: Seventeenth Annual Report of
the State Bureau of Labor Statistics Concerning Coal in
Illinois

1911 Sanborn Insurance Maps

The Sanborn Insurance Company made five sets of maps of Fairbury between 1885 and 1911. Copies of these maps can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/zc7vgoh>.

The 1911 Sanborn maps show two Fairbury coal mines. They show the mine west of Fairbury and the mine at the Timber Ridge Subdivision entrance.





Possible Photo of Co-Operative Coal Mine Being Built

In 2018, a photo was found by a local resident doing family genealogy research. Unfortunately, the photograph is not marked. It appears to be a photograph of the initial timber installation of building the top structure of a coal mine. The photographs came from a family involved with coal mining and the Co-operative coal mine. This was the coal mine located at the present day Timber Ridge sub-division entrance on 7th street.



Chapter 10

Abandoned Coal Mine Inhabitants

The author has given many Fairbury history talks. After one of these talks, a gentleman told me a story about the coal mine that was located in the area of the Honegger Feed Mill. He told me that he worked at a company that was located near the entrance to this abandoned coal mine. He heard stories that people were living in the abandoned mine.

One day, he said he climbed down the ladder. He found furniture in the mine. He said he also saw some dead bodies. There were dead bodies because someone pulled up the ladder while people were down in the mine. They could not get out, so they starved to death.

I thought about this story over the next couple of days. All three of the Fairbury coal mines were approximately 180 feet deep. There is no way an ordinary ladder could extend 180 feet deep.

All of the Fairbury mines were plagued with ground water. The 1878 book *The History of Livingston County*, noted the difficulty the Marsh's had with water in their coal mine:

scrabble.' To a man of less force, will-power and energy than Marsh, the idea of mining coal on the open prairie of Livingston County would have remained an idea, or it might have grown into a desire ; but he was made of the right material to push a gigantic enterprise to completion. He at once set about an investigation of the facts in the case, and, under his investigation, the possibilities steadily grew into a reality. The story of his struggles with adverse fortune, his heavy losses, his trials and failures, and his final success, would make an interesting and instructive chapter of history. Water, at various depths, so flooded his work and damaged it in various ways, that his friends and backers deemed the scheme impracticable ; but he was not discouraged, and, in the last extremity, he completed an invention of his own, by which the difficulty was overcome. At a depth of 180 feet, he struck a paying vein of excellent coal. The success

The Fairbury area has a high water table. You must dig through this water table area to reach a depth of 180 feet. The mines used pumps to keep the water under control. Once the mine closed and the pumps were shut off, the mine would quickly fill with water.

Because of the depth of the mine, and the ground water, I don't believe this story. It is possible this was a "folk tale" told by people imagining how people might live in an abandoned mine.

[Chapter 11](#)

Coal Mining Mules

History of Mules Used in Coal Mines

This article came from the Spring 1994 issue of an SIU magazine titled *Concerning Coal: Tidbits About Coal for Public Consumption*.

A Salute to the Mine Mule

by Stuart McGehee

Eastern Regional Coal Archives

"Mule (deaf) down with colic, 10 a.m." wrote a fretful West Virginia coal operator in his diary one morning in the fall of 1898. The manager concluded happily later, however, "Mule out of danger, 10 p.m." This experienced coal man's concern for a simple pack animal demonstrates the importance of the sturdy mule in the history of coal mining in America.

Although haulage engineering has ranged from Welsh women and children hauling baskets of coal on their heads to today's complex beltway conveyor systems, the mule remains the most beloved form of transporting coal from the face to the tippie. As late as 1955, hundreds of mine mules still worked underground in West Virginia.

First introduced into America by George Washington in 1785, the mule was perfectly suited to the demands of mining in the hand-loading era. Surefooted in the dark, long-lived, and dependable, mules lacked the high-struck skittish nature of horses and embodied a more efficient power-to-weight ratio. Working regular shifts like the miners whose coal they hauled, these beasts of burden were as reliable as they were stubborn. The heavy-boned, half-ton mule was usually good for several years of hard service before, worn-out, he was sold to a local farmer for less strenuous field work. Other animals--dogs, oxen, and sheep--could not compete with the tried and true mine mule.

Mules possessed several traits which made them well-suited for underground haulage. Their eyesight was keen in darkened passageways lit only by the flicker of whale oil or carbide lamps. Hitched in tandem, mules quickly learned to walk steadily between the rails of the car tracks. The tall upright ears of the mules would brush against low overhangs, warning the animal to lower its head to avoid injury.

A unique and fascinating culture soon sprang up around the peculiar constitution of the mine mule. The animals each had their own stalls in barns, some distance from the drift-mouth. The clever beasts were capable of finding their own "places" without human assistance. In the mule barn, where corn, oats, and hay were stored for fuel, a staff, consisting of a farrier, blacksmith, stable boss, and several mule skinnors and drivers, looked after the needs of the valuable animals, whose manure could then be sold for garden fertilizer.

Some mules however, were stabled underground in special stalls and seldom saw the light of day. Underground water fountains activated by mule muzzle and concrete wading pools to soak off encrusted slack from matted foreleg fur were other unique features of underground stables. Most mules worked six days a week and rested on Sunday; like many of us, they were often reluctant to return to work on Monday morning.

Mules usually worked best for one driver, often black, to whose tone and inflections he became accustomed. Mules led by Italian drivers would not answer to English-language commands, no

matter how exasperating to a new mule skinner. Nor would animals trained by vehemently cursing drivers perform for more puritanical skimmers. Some mules worked best when rewarded with occasional lumps of sugar, while others required a plug of tobacco to perform to capacity.

Like people, mules possessed distinct names and personalities, some cooperative and complacent, others contrite and cantankerous. Although phrases like "dumb as a mule" and "stubborn as a mule" are common-place, experienced coal people knew otherwise. The mule's obtuse manner was often a clever ruse to keep from working too hard. Most drivers carried scars from ruinous defeats suffered at the hooves of proud mules who were victorious underground where their vision bettered that of the poor skimmers.

The complex nature of coal mining produced great hardships and hazards for mules as well as men. "Balky mule lost on "A" shift on 4a pillar last night," noted the aforementioned operator in his diary. "Mule's foot caught between bumpers and leg broken. Animal shot," he concluded with evident distaste.

Alas, six and eight-ton gathering motors used less feed than even the most faithful beast and slowly replaced the animals as more productive means of hauling coal. Still, many veteran coal men wax nostalgic for the days when braying echoed through the haulways, and man and mule, side-by-side, forged as close a working relationship as has existed anywhere in the world.

Cherry Hill Mine Disaster

The Cherry Hill coal mine was located 83 miles northwest of Fairbury, near Mendota, Illinois. In 1909, there was fire in this coal mine in which 259 men and boys died. The disaster stands as the third most deadly in American coal mining history.

This disaster was caused by the hay for the mine mules catching on fire. Wikipedia.org has a brief account of this disaster:

On Saturday, November 13, 1909, like most days, nearly 500 men and boys, and three dozen mules, were working in the mine. Unlike most days, an electrical outage earlier that week had forced the workers to light kerosene lanterns and torches, some portable, some set into the mine walls.

Shortly after noon, a coal car filled with hay for the mules caught fire from one of the wall lanterns. Initially unnoticed and, by some accounts, ignored by the workers, efforts to move the fire only spread the blaze to the timbers supporting the mine.

The large fan was reversed in an attempt to blow out the fire, but this only succeeded in igniting the fan house itself as well as the escape ladders and stairs in the secondary shaft, trapping more miners below.

The two shafts were then closed off to smother the fire, but this also had the effect of cutting off oxygen to the miners, and allowing the "black damp," a suffocating mixture of carbon dioxide and nitrogen, to build up in the mine.

Some 200 men and boys made their way to the surface, some through escape shafts, some using the hoisting cage. Some miners who had already escaped returned to the mine to aid their coworkers. Twelve of these, led by John Bundy, made six dangerous cage trips, rescuing many others. The seventh trip, however, proved fatal when the cage operator misunderstood the miners' signals and brought them to the surface too late - the rescuers and those they attempted to rescue were burned to death.

One group of miners trapped in the mine built a makeshift wall to protect themselves from the fire and poisonous gases. Although without food, they were able to drink from a pool of water leaking from a coal seam, moving deeper into the mine to escape the black damp. Eight days later, the 21 survivors, known as the "eight day men", tore down the wall and made their way through the mine in search of more water, but came across a rescue party instead. One of those 21 survivors died two days later with complications from asthma.



Use of Mules in the Fairbury Coal Mines

Mules were used in the Fairbury coal mines per the story above about Mr. Kirkwood working in the Fairbury coal mine per the 1905 book Pages 392-396 from *A Twentieth century history and biographical record of Crawford County, Kansas*, by Home Authors; Illustrated. Published by Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, IL: 1905. 656 p. Ill. Transcribed by Carolyn Ward, in November, 2003.

Unfortunately, no known photographs of mules in the Fairbury coal mines are available.

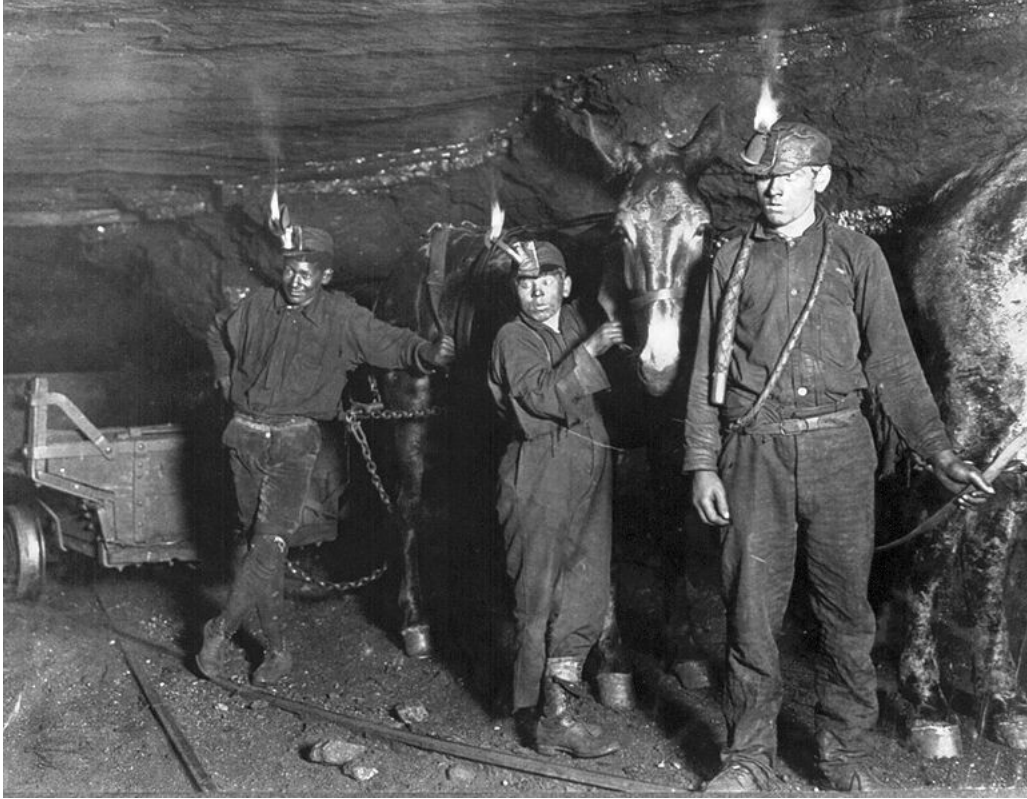
Below are some pictures of mules being used in coal mines:



This picture, from the 1903 *Illinois Bureau of Labors Statistics 22nd Annual Coal Report*, shows how mules hauled small coal cars from the mine.

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This photo was taken in September 1908 in a coal mine in Gary, West Virginia, USA by Lewis Wickes Hine (1874-1940). Today, a copy is held at the U.S. Library of Congress.



Fairbury Electric Mules

The author conducted an interview with Jim Steidinger on Oct 27, 2016 at Fairview Haven Nursing Home in Fairbury, Illinois. Before the Fairbury coal mine at the Timber Ridge sub-division closed in 1941, Jim remembers seeing "electric mules" on the ground at this mine. The electric mules replaced the animals that were used prior to this time.

More Information on Fairbury Mules in the Coal Mines

Back in April of 1973, Fairbury-Cropsey High-School student Anna Teubel, wrote a short essay which was published in the Illinois History magazine. She included a section about mules used in Fairbury coal mines:

Despite strikes and cave-ins, the miners managed to have some fun in their work. They had mule teams (a "hillbilly" team and a "snake stomper" team). They worked to see which team could mine the most coal. One Fourth of July they even held a small circus of their own. The hit of the show was a goat who pulled a mine car and who would shake hands with everyone.—[From Alma Lewis-James, *Stuffed Clubs and Antimacassars*, pp. 4, 23, 24, 41; *Fairbury Blade*, Centennial Edition, April 3, 1958, sec. 2, p. 1, sec. 4, pp. 2, 3.]

Anna's source for the mule stories was the Fairbury Blade.

Mules Used in Pontiac Coal Mines

A November 28, 1960, Pantagraph story, was about two old Pontiac coal miners. One of them recounted how he fed the mules in the coal mine:

MULES LIVE IN

While the men talked, Mr. Champley's son-in-law, Roy Acklin, told of working in the mine as a boy of 13 or 14. He said he went into the mines each day to feed the mules, which lived in the mine at all times.

There has been a little concern among residents at Pontiac as to the possibility of a cave-in at other locations along the Evans mine. According to Mr. Bromley and Mr. Champley there is little chance of this, inasmuch as the top vein is more than 200 feet below the surface.

1958 Blade Centennial Article on Coal Mining

The article below appeared in the special Centennial edition of the Fairbury Blade:

1958 Blade Centennial Edition

Some Words From The Coal Mines

by: John W. Allen - Southern Illinois University

Coal mining has been an important industry in Illinois for more than a hundred years. It doubtless will remain so for another hundred. Since mining began here, the methods and processes have changed greatly. The words and expressions that make up the trade jargon used by those working about the mines, have changed accordingly. Many terms served their particular use and are forgotten, unless remembered by a few old miners. Some of the terms they used, however, pass into general use.

One of the expressions that passed from the mines into common use was the one used to designate coal before it is processed. Such coal has always been designated as "mine run", a term now in common use to indicate almost any product before it has been assorted or graded. In the orchard country it has become "orchard run".

Another term often heard is "sprag", sometimes "sprig". The sprag of the miner was a hickory stick, often the remnant of a broken tool handle, about eighteen inches long. This was placed between the spokes of a mine car to keep it from rolling. Many a man who was never in a mine has "put a sprag in his wheel" when he wished to hinder someone's progress. To these two examples, those acquainted with mining jargon can add many others.

Inspection of the files of trade jargons in the Library of Congress and conversations with old miners yield hundreds of words that have particular significance about mines. For instance, and "old head" that had worked at the face for more than fifty years remembered when he was a "green horn", a "snake stomper" or a "hillbilly", depending upon who was naming him. He insisted, however, that he was a "mountain jack" who could be sent upon a fool's errand, like borrowing a foot jack or a half dozen drill holes.

The miner often gave strange names to the tools and devices he used. His shovel was a "banjo". A buggy was used to haul coal from a "widow maker" to the conveyor belt or "skip". "Bug dust" was powdered coal from cutting machines or drills. A miner might "take five" (a nap) in this bug dust. A "devil" or "jim crow" was a pronged device to hold across ties in position as track was laid. A "doodle bug", a "lightning bug" or a "bug light" was the miner's lamp. "Dog knots" were the incrustations that built up about the wick of an oil burning lamp and caused the light to burn brighter. "Gob" was mine refuse, like rock, shale, slate, and sulphury coal.

Mine cars were hauled by "hardtails" or "knotheads", otherwise mules driven by skinnners. Doors through the brattices built across entries were opened and closed by "trappers". These workmen were often men no longer able to do hard physical labor, or they were boys holding their first jobs in a mine. The writer knew one boy who upped his age a bit and became a trapper at twelve.

Two, three, or even four mules in tandem made up a "string" or "spike" team. The mule in front was the lead or spike mule and the one next to the car was the wheel mule. These could well be termed "wise mules". A "trip rider" collected loads or distributed loads from the "parting", "part-in", or "pardon" that was the underground switchyard. When motors came to replace mules, trip riders became "dinkey riders".

"Black damp" or "choke damp" was the gas sometimes found in mines that would smother a miner. It was brushed away by diverting an air current through the space where it collected. "Brushing" also might mean cutting away the floor to heighten a passageway.

Coal was mined from "rooms". A "buddy" was the man with whom one worked. This term also was applied to a large wooden wedge that a miner attached to his foot and used to scotch or chock the wheel of a punching machine and hold it against the face of the coal. "Black jack" was a heavy oil used by the grease boys. Miners also used it to smear

streaks of sulphur in large lumps of coal. Over this they would throw bug dust, trusting to their luck would not break and the "dock boss" place a fine on them.

"Kale" was money but "kale seed" was blasting powder that the miner used to fill the paper cartridges that he used to shoot coal. These shots were placed in holes drilled five feet or so into the face of the coal. A clay dummy with a copper needle was placed on the charge and securely tamped. When this was completed, the needle was withdrawn and a "squib" was inserted. At first, miners lighted their own squibs; later specialists called "shot firers" were assigned to this task. A shot that failed to explode was a hazard and was marked to be avoided for a specified number of hours.

Officials were "big wigs", "brass collars", "gaffers", or "big shots". "Hunkies" were miners of any nationality that could not speak understandable English. "Nigger heads" were rounded boulders that projected from the roof of mines. A "cap" was the board at the top of a "soldier" or mine prop. A "cage" was the platform on which men or cars were hoisted.

A tender roof that made the distinctive noises which indicated a likely fall was said to be "grunting" or "working". The cry, "She's coming in" or "She's falling in" caused every miner to scurry to the safest available place.

To the words listed here, scores of others could be added. There were "breakers" and "broomcats", "bunkers", and "crawfish", "flat-wheels", and "flunkeys", "goosenecks", and "gophers", "stoops, and "sumps", "sunshine miners", and "windjammers". Those who worked the mines used a jargon of their own.

Advent of Gasoline Motors

The March 1, 1918, Fairbury Blade had a brief mention of gasoline motors being introduced in one of the Fairbury coal mines.

The Fairbury Coal company has purchased a new gasoline motor car to use down in their mine to haul the coal to the mouth of the shaft.

Tex Carlson 1961 Blade Interview

In the Blade interview noted above, Tex also mentioned that mules were used in the Fairbury coal mines that he worked in.

[Chapter 12](#)

Fairbury Coal Mine Safety

In the United States today, employee safety is relatively good, and many companies strive to eliminate all work related injuries.

Rule-of-Thumb for Construction Work

These relatively good conditions were not always the case. Back in the 1920's and 1930's, the standard rule-of-thumb for construction projects was one worker death for every \$1 million in project costs. For one example of this rule-of-thumb, see this web page on the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge, <http://tinyurl.com/nqbd838>.

Rule-of-Thumb for Coal Mining Fatalities

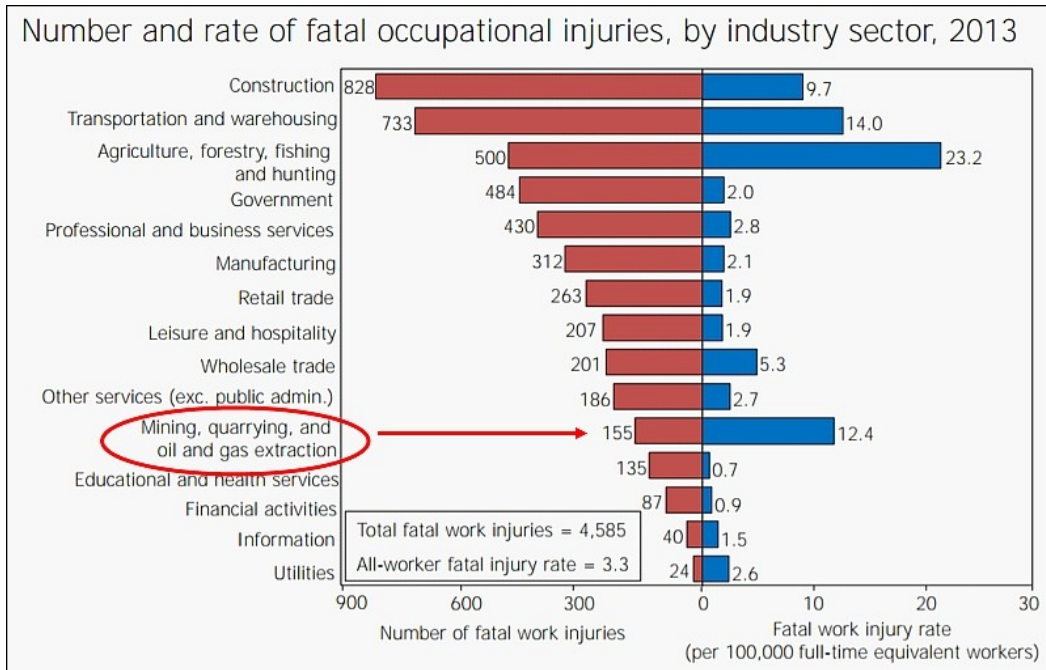
The Spring 1994 edition of the SIU magazine titled ***Concerning Coal: Tidbits About Coal for Public Consumption***, has an article that has some data on the rule-of-thumb used in the coal mining industry.

In 1883, the rule-of-thumb was one death per 90,000 tons of coal mined. By 1917, mine safety had improved, and the rule-of-thumb was one death per 380,000 tons of coal mined.

According to a wall posting at the Echoes Museum, Fairbury coal mines produced somewhere around 3 million tons of coal. If the death rate was one death per 380,000 tons of coal, we would expect to find about $(3,000,000/380,000)$ eight fatalities in Fairbury. The data source for the 3 million tons is unknown.

The ISGS 2012 report says there was 1.742 millions tons of coal mined from Fairbury. If we use the death rate of one per 380,000 tons of coal mined, we would expect to find about six fatalities in Fairbury.

Even today, mining is still one of the most dangerous jobs in the United States. This chart illustrates that mining is still one of the most dangerous occupations. It came from <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/cfch0012.pdf>.



Given the fact that Fairbury had at least four coal mines, and two of them operated for over 40 years, the laws of probability would predict several fatalities and injuries to Fairbury coal miners.

Fairbury Coal Mine Fatalities

Over the last several years, I have been looking for information on how many coal miners were injured or died while working in Fairbury coal mines. Below is the safety related information I have been able to find. These safety incidents are in chronological order.

January 16, 1873 Fatality #1

The Paxton Weekly Record newspaper published the following story.

Dennis O'Neal, a miner, was killed at Fairbury, on the 7th inst., by a rock falling upon him while at work in Marsh's coal shaft.

The author was unable to find any more information about this fatality. There are no Blade newspapers available for 1873, either in paper or microfilm. He was not buried in the Fairbury cemetery or Catholic cemetery. A burial site could not be found using FindaGrave.com or Ancestry.com.

October 14, 1875 Fatality #2

The October 14, 1875 edition of the Eureka Herald published a story about a Eureka man being killed in a Fairbury coal mine.

At the Fairbury coal mine, Sept. 28, a car jumped the track and knocked away a prop 4 causing the roof to fall, thus crushing to death Charles Damon.

The September 30, 1895 edition of the Daily Inter Ocean, Chicago, Illinois, published a story about Charles Damon.

Crushed in a Mine

Special Telegram to the Inter-Ocean

Fairbury, Ill., September 29. Charles Damon was crushed under a vast mass of roofing in the mine of the Fairbury Coal Company yesterday. The car jumped the track and knocked out a prop, causing the roofing to fall. The Masonic order buried him with honors today.

Unfortunately, no Fairbury Blade article is available from either the online version or the paper books of this newspaper.

January 1876 Coal Miner Severe Injury #1

The 1878 Livingston County history book has this story.

JOHN GARDNER, Constable, Fairbury; born at Tollcross, near Glasgow, Scotland, Sept 14, 1838; came to this country in July, 1868, locating at Fairbury, his present home, where he engaged in coal mining, until January, 1876, there meeting with a severe accident while blasting, disabling his right arm. He was elected Constable in April, 1876, and re-elected in April, 1877. Married in June, 1863, to Miss Ann Arbuckle, who was born near Glasgow, Scotland, Oct. 11, 1837; six children--Catharine, Walter, Nellie B., James, John, and Annie.

January 17, 1880 Fatality #3

The Daily Illinois State Register in Springfield, Illinois, published the following article.

January 17, 1880 Daily Illinois State Register, Springfield, Illinois

Alfred Eaton was instantly crushed to death by the fall of stone from the roof of the central coal shaft at Fairbury on Saturday. The accident was caused by the car in which he was riding jumping the track and knocking down the timber supports.

Unfortunately, no Fairbury Blade article is available from either the online version or the paper books of this newspaper.

October 28, 1881 Coal Miner Suicide

The October 28, 1881, edition of the Pantagraph carried this story:

John Pritchard, of Fairbury, a coal miner, attempted suicide Tuesday. He has been sick and despondent. He will probably die.

January 4, 1888 Fatality #4

The Daily Illinois State Register in Springfield, Illinois, published the following article.

Wm. Nimmo, while ascending in the cage at Walton's coal shaft, at Fairbury, Saturday, was struck by a descending cage and crushed to death.

The January 6, 1888, Fairbury Blade published the following article.

A Sad Accident

Just before six o'clock Saturday evening, our citizens were startled by the report that William Nimmo had been instantly killed at the west shaft. The report was so sudden and improbable that it was not generally credited until after further investigation. It was soon corroborated however, by the following particulars. Mr. Nimmo was acting in the capacity of "cager", that is he took the empty cars off the cage, and put on the loaded ones. There are two cages, one coming down empty as the other one goes up loaded. The "sump" is an excavation immediately under the cage, and spanned only by two or three timbers on which the cage rests while being loaded. Mr. Nimmo had just sent up a car of coal, and it is supposed that he was bailing water out of the "sump" on the side where the cage was coming down, when he was struck by the cage and instantly killed. Of course no one knows just how it happened, but the general supposition is, by those who were experienced in mining, that the above is probably correct. The remains were not mangled to any extent, and were immediately taken to the home of his bereaved family. The deceased was a hard working, industrious man of good repute. His long experience in mining, and the thoroughness and care with which he did his work, makes it a little strange that he should thus terminate a life of toil and prosperity.

Mr. Nimmo was a Scotchman by birth, coming to this city about sixteen years ago, and at the time of his death was nearly 51 years old. He was considered one of the best posted miners in this section of the country, and had followed the business for many years. He leaves a wife and five children, three of whom have nearly or quite reached their majority.

The funeral was held at the M.E. church Monday afternoon, Rev. R.B. Williams officiating, and was very generally attended by the people of the community. It was conducted under the auspices of St. Bernard lodge K. of P.

The Inquest

The men comprising the jury to render a verdict made an examination of the body Monday, and on Tuesday ten witnesses were examined at Justice Ide's office. At first it was supposed that the inquest was held merely to comply with the law, but it soon became evident that a case of damages was the object, on the plea of some mismanagement, or incompetency on the part of the operators of the mine. This claim didn't hold, however, although it was vigorously prosecuted by Mr. McLaughlin, brother-in-law of the deceased. After spending the entire day in examining and arguing the matter, the jury returned the following verdict.

We find that the said William Nimmo came to his death by going under the cage while it was descending into the shaft, and being crushed, and that the accident was not caused by any fault of the operators of the mine.

L.B. Dominy

J.F. Moberly

O.S. Westervelt

S. Olney

N.S. Parsons

T.D. George

September 8, 1888 Fatality #5

The September 8, 1888 Blade published the following story.

Fatal Accident

About 5:30 Tuesday evening Wm. Rightsell, jr., was fatally injured in the Co-operative coal shaft. He was firing a blast and it is supposed it was discharged prematurely, and he could not get out of the way in time to save himself. He was thrown against a mass of rocks by the shock of the explosion and was horribly mangled. After being removed to his home all was done for him that was possible, but, unconscious and disfigured, he only lived three hours after the accident.

The victim of this fearful accident was an industrious, steady man, and he leaves a wife and family of young children. It is a sad case, and appeals to the sympathies of the community.

The September 12, 1888, True Republican published the following story.

William Rightsell, Jr., was killed in the co-operative coal shaft near Fairbury the other evening by a shot striking the top part of his body.

July 10, 1899 Fatality #6

The web site *Illinois Coal & Coal Mining History & Genealogy* at http://hinton-gen.com/coal/livingston_fatal.html, lists all the fatalities in Livingston County coal mines. The following case was extracted from this web site.

WAMSLEY

July 10, 1899, Joseph Wamsley, of Fairbury, miner, aged 55 years, married, was fatally injured by a fall of rock on the entry, in Walton Bros, mine, at Fairbury, in Livingston county. Deceased went into the next room to borrow a cartridge pin, and while on the entry a small piece of rock fell, striking him on the head and knocking him backward on a pile of ties. He was removed to his home where he died six days afterwards. He left a widow and two children.

The July 21, 1899 Blade published the following story.

Joseph Wamsley

Joseph Wamsley died at his home in this city Sunday evening, July 16th, aged 55 years and 1 day. About a week previous he was injured by a rock falling upon him while at work, in the coal mine. It was at first thought that his injuries would not prove fatal, but in a few days it developed that he was injured internally and despite all aid he passed away.

The deceased was born in Maysville, Ky., July 15, 1844. When he was 20 years old he enlisted in the 4th Ohio cavalry, known as King's Independent cavalry, and served his country on the field of battle until the close of the war, when he was honorably discharged. After the war, he came to Illinois and for the greater part of the past 30 years he has made Fairbury his home. He was united in marriage to Miss Agnes Easton April, 1868. To this union two sons were born. Henry, who died at the age of 9 years, and William, who survives him, and mourns the death of a kind and indulgent father. He was again united in marriage to Mrs. Belle Houston September 28, 1897, and the bereaved wife is left to mourn his death.

During his long residence in this city, the deceased lived the life of a just and honorable man and he leaves a large circle of friends, who, with the relatives, mourn his death. He was an honored member of Post 75, G. A. R., and St. Bernard lodge, No. 29, Knights of Pythias, and the internment was made under the direction of those bodies.

The funeral services were held at the Christian church Thursday afternoon at 2 o'clock, Rev. N.J. Wright delivered the sermon. The church was filled to overflowing with sorrowing friends who assembled to pay the last mark of esteem to the dead. The remains were laid to rest in the Fairbury cemetery. The bereaved family have the sympathy of the community.

December 10, 1901 Fatality #7

The web site *Illinois Coal & Coal Mining History & Genealogy* at http://hinton-gen.com/coal/livingston_fatal.html, lists all the fatalities in Livingston County coal mines. The following case was extracted from this web site.

DALERY / DALEY

December 10, 1901, John Dalery, of Fairbury, miner, age 38 years, single, was severely injured by a fall of rock at the working face in the Cooperative Coal company's mine, Fairbury, Livingston county. He was loading a car, when a rock suddenly fell on him, causing his death two hours after the accident.

The December 18, 1901, Blade published the following story.

Killed in the Mine.

John D. Daily received injuries at the Co-operative coal mine Tuesday afternoon which resulted in his death within a few hours. Mr. Daily, in company with James and Peter Monroe and Evan Williams, went below Tuesday afternoon to clean up their rooms. Mr. Daily worked in a room adjoining Evan Williams. He had been to work but a short time when Mr. Williams heard a cash of falling rock and groans coming from the room in which Mr. Daily had been at work. Mr. Williams rushed into the room and found his fellow workman buried beneath a heavy fall of rock. He hastily summoned the Monroe boys and it took their united efforts to remove great mass which had internally crushed Mr. Daily into the earth. The injured man was removed to the top of the mine and medical aid summoned. It was impossible to do anything to give him relief and he died within two hours without becoming conscious.

The deceased, about 37 years old, was well known in this city having spent his entire life here. He has always followed the occupation at which he lost his life. He was one of the stockholders in the co-operative mine, a faithful worker and a man well liked by everybody who knew him. He was the chief support of his aged father and his sister with whom he made his home, and his sad death is a terrible blow to them. Besides his aged father leaves three brothers, James and Charles, of Chicago, and Joseph of this city, and two sisters. Mrs. Doyle, of Gridley, and Miss Dailey of this city, all of whom were present at the funeral. The services were held at St. Joseph's Catholic Church Thursday morning at 11 o'clock, Rev. James F. Francis officiating and were largely attended. The remains were laid to rest in the Fairbury cemetery.

The following verdict was rendered by the coroner's jury.

We, the jury, appointed to inquire into the death of John D. Daily, on oath do find that he came to his death by the falling of a rock in the co-operative coal mine Tuesday, December 10, 1901, between the hours of one and two o'clock p.m. We also find that there was no avoidable cause by the evidence given.

James G. Gibbons, foreman, P.E. Harrington, Henry Remmers, F.J. Moran, W.H. Williams, T.D. Karnes.

December 4, 1909 Fatality #8

The web site *Illinois Coal & Coal Mining History & Genealogy* at http://hinton-gen.com/coal/livingston_fatal.html, lists all the fatalities in Livingston County coal mines. The following case was extracted from this web site:

PRETTE

December 4, 1909, Chas. Prette, aged 34 years, married, was employed as a day laborer in mine operated by the Fairbury Coal Co., located at Fairbury. He went into a room to clean up some fallen rock. While doing so, more rock fell on him, injuring him fatally. He died a few hours after being taken home. He leaves a widow and four children.

Further investigation found the name of the deceased miner was spelling incorrectly. His actual name was Charles Paratti. The December 10, 1909 Blade published the following story.

Meets Death in Mine

Another life was given in toll last Saturday that humanity might be warned. Charles Paratti met with an accident while employed in the mine of the Fairbury Coal Co., which resulted in his death a few hours later. The accident happened about eleven o'clock Saturday morning. He was working company work and had gone into the room of Edward Carlton to clean up some rock. Mr. Carlton heard him test the rock under which he was going to work, with his pick, and it seemed to sound all right. A few moments later Carlton heard the rock fall and Paratti call for help. He rushed in where he lay and found him pinned beneath a large piece of slate. Carlton by almost superhuman efforts succeeded in lifting the rock off the injured man. Help was summoned and Mr. Paratti was carried out of the mine and was taken home in Dr. Otis' automobile. He was conscious until the last and seemed to realize that death was near. He asked his companions not to swear when they were taking him out of the mine and told them to put their trust in the Lord. With the exception of a small cut upon the back there was no marks upon the injured man, but an examination showed that he was injured internally and death was only a question of a short time. He passed peacefully away at three o'clock.

Charles Paratti was born in Italy May 16, 1872. He was united in marriage in that country to Rose Marino May 16, 1896, settling first at Kangley, a mining town near Streator. Four children were born to them, three boys and one girl, Frank aged 13, John aged 11, Joseph, aged 9, and Margaret, aged 6, who with the bereaved wife survive and mourn his death. The family came to Fairbury about a year ago and he has since followed the occupation of a miner. His death leaves the bereaved wife in straitened circumstances and her four children to care for. The funeral services were held at St. John's Catholic church Monday forenoon at 9:30, Rev. James Francis officiating. The miners union of which he was a member, attended in a body.

The bereaved family will have the sympathy of the community, and this is a case in which sympathy should extend beyond mere words.

Card of Thanks

I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the coal miner of Fairbury and the good friends, who helped me in the time of my trouble.

Mrs. Paratti and Little Children

RESOLUTIONS

Fairbury, Ill., Dec 8, 1909

Whereas, Through a lamentable and unforeseen accident, having occurred at The Fairbury Coal Company's mine in this city; whereby Charles Paratti, a brother, worker, and member has lost his life, and

Whereas, Through his untimely death and removal from our midst, his family has been deprived of their natural protector and breadwinner, and we have been bereft of his presence and support in our ranks, and

Whereas, We recognize the awfulness that has befallen our brother, which may overtake us at any time in following our very necessary, yet dangerous vocation as coal miners, therefore be it,

Resolved That we the officers and members of the Local Union NO. 468, United Mine Workers of America, extend to our deceased brother's wife and family our sincere expression of condolence and regret for the loss of their beloved one and be further,

Resolved, That, our charter be draped in mourning for ninety days, and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the bereaved wife and family and to the Mine Workers Journal for insertion in their column.

Signed in behalf of Local Union No. 468.

R.A. McAllister

Fred Baker

Carlyle Smith

December 29, 1916 Near Miss Safety Incidents

On this date, the Fairbury Blade published the following article about two near misses that occurred in a Fairbury coal mine.

MORE BAD LUCK

William Morris, owner of the Fairbury Coal company, seems to be having more than his share of misfortune in running the plant. About two weeks ago the cable broke and let a cage and a car of coal fall clear to the bottom. Tuesday of this week, more bad luck struck the mine when the cable jumped from the large wheel in the top of the tippie while a car of coal was being lifted. When this happened the axle of the wheel broke and with the car load of coal pulling on one end of the cable and the engine pulled down through the heavy timbers a distance of about thirty feet before the engine could be stopped.

No one was hurt, but George Hibschr Sr., who is blacksmith at the mine had a very narrow escape from injury or death. He was standing at the mouth of the shaft waiting for a cage to come down on which were some tools to be mended. The heavy timbers fairly rained around him, one large 12x12 inch piece missing him by only a hair's breadth, but luckily he escaped without a scratch.

The men who were in the shaft had to come up through the air shaft. The mules which are used in the mine and which are always brought to the top to be fed, are having their meals served to them down below. The shaft has been closed down since the accident, but expect to resume work today.

January 18, 1929 Severe Injury #2

On this date, the Fairbury Blade published the story below.

BADLY INJURED YESTERDAY BY A FALL OF COAL

Edward Hetherington Has Both Legs Broken in Two Places in Co-operative Coal Co. Mines

Edward Hetherington, who is employed in the mines of the Co-operative Coal company, was badly injured yesterday morning by a fall of coal, he having both legs broken in two places, the right leg being broken in two places above the knee, and the left one being broken in two places below the knee.

Mr. Hetherington, who is around 50 years old, has worked in the mines a long time. Wednesday evening before quitting work the shots in his room had been fired to loosen up the coal for the following day. These shots had not torn down the coal completely loose and yesterday morning he was working around a big block of coal, weighing around a ton and a half. It was while he was engaged in working around this big block of coal that it broke loose and fell, the main force of it striking his legs. He called for help, and Walter Hetherington, a nephew, who was working nearby, went to his aid. Other help was secured and the injured man brought to the top and taken to the office of Dr. J.H. Langstaff in the J.P. Cook ambulance, where x-ray pictures were taken to determine his injuries. While the principal injuries are as noted above; he has numerous other bruises. He was taken to his home yesterday afternoon.

February 17, 1935 Earlier Coal Mining Injury Shortens Life

On this date, the Fairbury Blade published the story below.

EDWARD HETHERINGTON

Edward M. Hetherington passed away at his home on East Locust street on Monday evening at 7:30 o'clock. He was aged 59 years, 11 months, and 8 days.

On January 17, 1929, Mr. Hetherington was badly injured in the mine of the Co-operative Coal company by a fall of coal, and while he had been able to get around some, he never fully recovered from the injuries sustained at that time.

He was the son of Thomas and Frances Hetherington and was born March 9, 1875, near Toledo, Ohio. He came here with his parents when one year of age. He married Miss Orpha Easton. Surviving are three daughters; Mrs. Alice Robinson and Mrs. Beulah Van Oppen, both of East Peoria, and Miss Sinnia Bennett of Fairbury, and a son Thomas, at home.

There are two sisters, Mrs. Jane Hornsby and Mrs. Maria Easton of Fairbury, and two brothers, William of Fairbury and Jonathan of Los Angeles, California. There are twelve grandchildren.

Funeral services were held from the home Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock. Dr. C. S. Davies officiating. Burial was in Graceland cemetery.

The pallbearers were: Will Frice, R. A. McAllister, Frank Van Oppen, John Mammen and Adolph and Edward Carlson.

April 4, 1941 Coal Mining Vehicle Accident

The April 4, 1941, edition of the Pantagraph carried the story below. This Fairbury coal mine closed later this same year.

Fairbury Wife Killed in Crash

Body Pinned Under Auto Steering Wheel

FAIRBURY.—(PNS)—Mrs. Robert Grusy of Fairbury was killed in an automobile accident at 7:20 p. m. Thursday in Fairbury when the car she was driving collided headon with a truck driven by Harry Lawrence of Fairbury and owned by the Indian Creek Coal company. The accident occurred at the corner of Webster and Oak streets on U. S. route 24.

Mr. Lawrence escaped injury as did a companion, Roy Johnson. Mr. Grusy received a head injury and was removed to the Fairbury hospital. His condition is not considered serious.

Body Pinned in Wreckage.

Mrs. Grusy was pinned beneath the steering wheel of her car and

it took several bystanders nearly 15 minutes to remove her from the wreckage. She was taken to the Fairbury hospital but died shortly after her arrival there.

Reports indicated her chest had been crushed by the impact.

Truck Reported Without Lights.

Witnesses said the coal truck, carrying 9,100 pounds of coal, was traveling west on the highway without lights when it collided with the eastbound Grusy car. John Johansen, waiting at the intersection, was an eyewitness.

State Highway Patrolman Edwin Tetley and City Patrolman Fred Cooper investigated the accident. The car and truck were nearly demolished by the force of the collision.

The body of Mrs. Grusy was removed to the Mowry funeral home.

A coroner's jury was expected to be impaneled Friday.

Mrs. Grusy was born Myrtle Smith and was married to Mr. Grusy about eight years ago. They lived at 309 South First street in Fairbury. She had been previously married to Everett Fraher, formerly of Fairbury.

She is survived by her husband; one son, Billy Fraher, and a niece, who formerly made her home with the Grusys.

PARENTS! TEACHERS!

For Externally Caused
ADOLESCENT PIMPLES

Why Not Suggest



Data from United States Mine Rescue Web Site

This web site can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/y7eqno7u>.

The Illinois data was downloaded from this web site and then sorted to find fatalities or injuries which occurred in Fairbury coal mines. The results are shown below.

Illinois Mining Accidents 1883-1971							
Number	DATE	NAME	AGE	Residence or MineLocation	fatal or nonfatal	PAGE	Reference
1	1899JUL10	WAMSLEY, JOSEPH	55	FAIRBURY	F	64,67	17
2	1901DEC10	DALERY, JOHN	38	FAIRBURY	F	105,106	17
3	1909DEC4	PRETTE, CHARLES	34	FAIRBURY	F	282,283	17
1	1888OCT29	BUBSY, MADISON	27	FAIRBURY	N	9	17
2	1888SEP1	BROWN, ANDREW	32	FAIRBURY	N	9	17
3	1888SEP1	WILLIAMS, EVANS	30	FAIRBURY	N	9	17
4	1895JAN15	SALMON, ED	24	FAIRBURY	N	12	17
5	1896DEC23	RADFORD, LOUIS	45	FAIRBURY	N	14	17
6	1896MAR12	DALY, JOE	28	FAIRBURY	N	49	17
7	1896NOV12	REDFERN, L	45	FAIRBURY	N	13	17
8	1897AUG20	KERR, GEORGE T	28	FAIRBURY	N	91	17
9	1897NOV29	POWELL, THOMAS	44	FAIRBURY	N	91	17
10	1897OCT19	KELLEY, THOMAS		FAIRBURY	N	91	17
11	1897OCT22	WILLIAMS, EVAN	40	FAIRBURY	N	91	17
12	1897SEP10	BROWN, A A	42	FAIRBURY	N	91	17
13	1898NOV25	BROWN, A A	40	FAIRBURY	N	9	17
14	1899JUN12	MORAN, WILLIAM	22	FAIRBURY	N	10	17
15	1905MAR21	WILLIAMS, THOMAS	23	FAIRBURY	N	191	17
16	1910NOV26	DAILEY, JOSEPH	40	FAIRBURY	N	192	17
17	1911JUN10	PISSIO, PETER	27	FAIRBURY	N	193	17
18	1914SEP26	WILLIAMS, WILLIAM	60	FAIRBURY	N	109	17
19	1915MAR7	WALKER, J A	56	FAIRBURY	N	109	17
20	1916MAR18	McALLISTER, R J	48	FAIRBURY	N	116	17
21	1924MAR8	McREYNOLDS, BERT	38	FAIRBURY	N	107	17

The three fatalities are the some of the same fatalities as already noted. Other non-fatal injuries are also included in this table.

Fairbury Blade Article on Fairbury Coal Mining Safety

The author wrote the following article about Fairbury coal mining safety.

Being a Fairbury Coal Miner Was a Dangerous Occupation

John Marsh and his son Henry Marsh discovered coal one mile west of Fairbury in 1862. Their discovery of coal 200 feet below the prairie set off a coal mining boom in Illinois. Within a few years, Fairbury had five different coal mines operating. People flocked to Fairbury to work as coal miners. They came from the Eastern United States and Europe to Fairbury. The Fairbury coal mines operated from 1862 until the last mine closed in 1941.

It is unclear exactly how many total tons of coal were mined from beneath Fairbury. The Fairbury Echoes Museum has a sign which indicates that around three millions tons of coal were mined. Unfortunately, there is no data source for this estimate.

The Illinois State Geological Survey 2012 report reports there was a total of 1.742 million tons of coal mined from Fairbury. Unfortunately, the ISGS only had production data from three of the five Fairbury coal mines.

If the ratio of 1.742 million tons of coal for three mines is applied to five mines, the total coal production from Fairbury would be 2.9 million tons. This is very close to the 3.0 million number posted in the Fairbury Echoes Museum. So, a fair assumption is that about 3.0 million tons of coal were mined from Fairbury between 1862 and 1941.

In the building construction industry, they developed a rule-of-thumb for worker safety. In the 1930s, major building projects experienced one fatality for each \$1 million of project expenditure. This ratio applied to big projects like the Boulder Dam, skyscrapers in New York City, and the Golden Gate Bridge.

The Spring 1994 edition of the SIU magazine titled *Concerning Coal: Tidbits About Coal for Public Consumption*, has an article that has some data on the safety rule-of-thumb used in the coal mining industry. From 1883 until 1917, the rule-of-thumb was one death per every 90,000 tons of coal mined. After 1917, there were some improvements implemented in coal mining. These improvements resulted in a safer rule-of-thumb of one fatality per every 380,000 tons of coal mined.

If the safer rule-of-thumb is applied to the three million tons of coal mined in Fairbury, we should expect to have experienced about eight fatalities in Fairbury coal mines.

In a typical Fairbury coal mine, the main shaft was excavated down to the coal vein located 180 to 200 feet below ground. In this main shaft, two elevator cars operated under steam power. While one car went up, the other car came down.

The coal veins in Fairbury were only about five feet high. The mines used a room and pillar method of mining. Miners drilled holes in the coal vein. Explosives were inserted into the drilled holes and fired to loosen the coal in the vein. The miners propped up the ceiling using wooden posts. They moved the coal chunks into little railroad cars pulled by mules. They left coal pillars to keep the roof from collapsing.

The mules pulled the railroad cars to the steam-powered elevators. The elevators transported the coal up to the surface. On the surface, the coal was ground into smaller pieces, and then sold to retail customers.

A fundamental safety review of this type of mine reveals several high-risk areas. Large chunks of coal or rock falling unexpectedly and crushing the miner was the highest risk. Six Fairbury coal miners perished because of coal or rocks falling on them.

The second highest risk was blasting related accidents. Blasts occurring at the wrong time could severely injure the coal miner. Two Fairbury coal miners perished because of blasting related accidents.

Another risk was the small train car derailling and knocking out a wooden roof support pole. Once the pole was moved, the roof collapsed, and the miner was crushed by falling rock. One Fairbury coal miner perished because of a train car derailment.

Another risk was moving elevator cars. One miner perished when he was crushed by a descending elevator car.

Records indicate at least ten coal miners perished in the Fairbury coal mines. This is slightly more than expected using the industry safety averages. There were also many near-miss accidents which injured miners. Coal mining was probably the most dangerous occupation in Fairbury while the coal mines were in operation.

Chapter 13

Fairbury Coal Mining Equipment

We only have one tool that was used in Fairbury coal mines. The Fairbury Echoes Museum has a mining lamp on display, that was used in the Fairbury coal mines:





The museum also has a story about miner's lamps near the actual lamp display:

The Miner's Lamp

*"My lamp is my sun
And all my days are nights."*

Historian George Korson, in his book *Coal Dust on the Fiddle*, says that this old Belgian miner's song expresses how important the miner's lamp was. "The pioneer miner dug coal by the light of a tallow candle, carrying it in a clay saucer-tray or wearing it in his cloth cap. At the face he might rest his candle stub on a lump of coal near enough for him to work by."

Later, small tin oil lamps, worn on the miners' caps, supplemented or replaced candles. Korson describes the oil lamp as having "a long snout in front and a hook in the back to fasten on the cap." The oil lamps used cotton wicks to burn lard, whale, or fish oil and, later, a black fuel oil sometimes diluted with kerosene. Although the light from these sources might be dim, Korson says, "the practical miner knew just how and where to throw its gleam on the solid wall of coal before him, a skill which came with long experience."

Miners' candles often caused fire-damp (methane gas mixed with air) in the mines to explode. Korson claims that because of that, miners stopped carrying candles and began to carry decaying fish, which apparently glowed in the dark. However, the light was not bright enough to work by, and the smell of the fish was very unpleasant.

When the safety lamp was invented in 1816 by Sir Humphrey Davy, it eliminated one source of mine explosions. It took Davy only three months to perfect his invention. His lamp had a wire screen around the flame of the lamp, and the flame could not pass it and cause explosions.

The Fairbury Echoes Museum also has a photograph of a group of early Fairbury coal miners. The coal miners in this picture are also holding some of their coal mining tools:



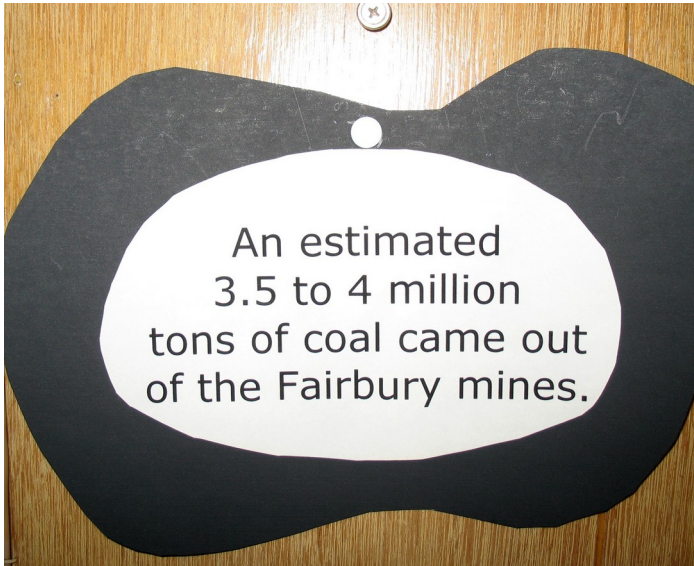
A couple of the miners are holding their pick axes. In the second row, lower left, a miner is holding two bits used to drill into the coal vein. Most of the miners are also wearing their head lamps, almost identical to the lamp noted above, on display at the Echoes Museum.

Chapter 14

Fairbury Coal Mining Production Data

Total Fairbury Coal Production

The Fairbury Echoes Museum has a wall display saying the total amount of coal that was produced by Fairbury coal mines was 3.5 to 4.0 million tons.



Production and Sales Records for Fairbury Coal Mines

Diane Pawlowski, a Board member of the Echoes Museum, graciously loaned me a couple of old journal entry type books from Fairbury coal mines. Below is a typical page from one of these ledger books:

		continued <i>Wednesday May 4th 1904</i>				143
from 1904		Lump	1 st net	2 nd net	cash	
Brought forward		12430	9950	3350	14 85	
1150	O'Leary	2250			2 80	
1150	H. O'Leary		2200			Per Nelson ✓ 2 20
	Kelso		2000		2 00	Lyn
	Rocky			950	65	
	Kelso			slack	25	
	Kassner	1850				Joe Kassner ✓ 2 30
		16530	14150	4300	20 55	
		<i>Thursday May 5th 1904</i>				
1125	Ariss		3150		3 15	
1300	Kelso	2000				R. F. McAllister ✓
1300	D. Freeman	3530				D. D. Freeman ✓ 4 40
1350	Will	1330			1 65	
1500	Kelso		2000			N. B. Clenden ✓ 2 00
425	Pamsey	250			15	
1050	Joe Young			3500		Water Works ✓
1500	Kelso	3200				Joe Longman ✓ 2 40
1250	J. Fitzgerald		1500		1 50	
1125	Ariss		1400		1 40	Barnes
1375	Bolliger		2800		2 80	
1175	Bentley		2200		2 20	Straight
1100	O. Hanna			2000	1 50	
1050	Young			2000		Asa Pulman ✓ 1 50
625	Blair			400	30	
1175	P. Gregg		1650			M. M. A. Veach ✓ 1 65
1175	Bentley			2280	1 70	Anchor 175
	Weeks	1600				H. Weeks ✓ 2 00
	Somerville			1000	75	
		11910	14700	11180	17 10	
		<i>Friday May 6th 1904</i>				
1125	Huber	1080			1 35	
1000	Armstrong		1000		1 00	
1050	Hanna		2200		2 20	
1125	Dick	1730			2 15	
1050	Joe Young			3400		Water Works ✓
1050	O. Hanna		1000		1 00	
1175	P. Gregg		1000		1 75	
1225	J. Morris	1000		1000		J. Morris ✓ 1 25
	Jeff	3810	5200	4400	9 45	

This ledger book was for part of Wednesday May 4, 1904, all of Thursday, and part of Friday. An excerpt from this ledger page is shown below showing all the entries for Thursday May 5, 1904:

Wednesday ^{continued} May 4 th 1904						143
from 142		Lump	1 st nut	2 nd nut	cash	
Brought forward		12430	9950	3350	14 85	
1150	W Patch	2250			2 80	
1250	H Clout		2200			Pres Wilson ✓ 2 20
	Kelso		2000		2 00	Lynn
	Rocky			950	65	
	Kelso			slack	25	
	Kawner	1850				Jno Kawner ✓ 2 30
		16530	14150	4300	20 55	
Thursday May 5 th 1904						
1125	Ariss		3150		3 15	
1500	Kelso	2000				R & McAllister ✓
1300	D Freeman	3530				DD Freeman ✓ 4 40
1350	Well	1330			1 65	
1500	Kelso		2000			N B Claudon ✓ 2 00
425	Ramsey	250			15	
1050	Jno Young			3500		Water Work ✓
1500	Kelso	3200				Jas Longman ✓ 2 40
1250	J Fitzgerald		1500		1 50	
1125	Ariss		1400		1 40	(Barnes)
1375	Bolliger		2800		2 80	
1175	Bentley		2200		2 20	Straight
1100	O Hanna			2000	1 50	
1050	Young			2000		Ava Pulnam ✓ 1 50
625	Blair			400	30	
1175	J Gregg		1650			W M A Veatch ✓ 1 65
1175	Bentley			2280	1 70	Anchor 170
	Hecks	1600				H Hecks ✓ 2 00
	Somerhill			1000	75	
		11910	14700	11180	17 10	

These ledger books are a little difficult to decipher. The left hand column is the accumulated production by coal miner. The second column is the coal miner's name. It appears the miners were paid a different amount depending on whether it was lump coal, 1st nut, or 2nd nut. Lump coal was the raw chunks of coal as it was mined. The 1st nut referred to the 1st screening of the coal. The 2nd nut was the second screening of the coal.

On Thursday, May 5, 1904, Mr. Bentley mined 2200 pounds of 1st nut. He was paid \$2.20 for this, or \$2.00 per ton (2,000 pounds) mined.

On the same day, Mr. Bentley also mined 2280 pounds of 2nd nut and was paid \$1.70, or \$1.50 per ton. The pay each miner received is under the "Cash" column.

On the right hand side is cash sales to customers. N.B. Claudon bought \$2.00 worth of coal. Since we don't know the amount of coal he bought, we don't know the selling price per ton.

These old journals are a fascinating record of Fairbury life in 1904. Most homes heated their houses and cooked using coal. About everyone in Fairbury had to buy coal either directly from the coal mine, or pay a distributor to deliver it to their home.

Annual Coal Production Reports

There is a series of volumes of books that cover annual coal production of the Illinois coal mines. These books have not been digitized yet. At this time, the author has not traveled to Springfield to examine the printed books.

Chapter 15

Sink Holes

In many cities with mines located below them, there are often issues with the ground subsiding, or sinking.

The City of Fairbury does have abandoned coal mine tunnels below it. We have tunnel maps for the Timber Ridge Sub-division coal mine that operated the longest. Most of these tunnels are just west of 7th street and are under the golf course.

We have been unable to find any tunnel maps for the other coal mines that operated in Fairbury at this time. The State of Illinois shows that the houses on the northwest portion of Fairbury are probably on top of the abandoned mine that was located near Honeggers Feed Mill. It is also likely there are tunnels in the 9th and 10th Street area by the railroad tracks where the East Shaft operated for roughly 40 years.

Fortunately, there is only one known case of the ground sinking, and the cause was attributed to a coal mine tunnel underneath. This episode was covered in Alma Lewis James' book *Stuffed Clubs & Antimacassars*:

Human nature being what it is regarding civic improvements, they might have managed to get along, nevertheless, except that the Arcade Block sank, caused by a mine tunnel running beneath. It was no sudden cave-in, but a gradual sinking. It was first noticed by a T.P. & W. engineer, for the drop had left one of his rails eight inches lower than the other. When he ran over it this time, there was such a movement along the train that he thought he had run off the track. He rushed back to investigate, discovered what had happened, and reported it at the station.

For several days the sinking caused great excitement throughout the town, because it was impossible to tell how much farther it would go. There was already a decided difference between street levels, noticeable to this day, and the water tower, which stood on steel supports, had shifted to a dangerous angle.

Engineers were called in for consultation. They ordered a new tower; and the City Fathers decided that, while they were about it, they might just as well dig a new and better well. They got sulphur water.

Why Not More Sink Holes in Fairbury?

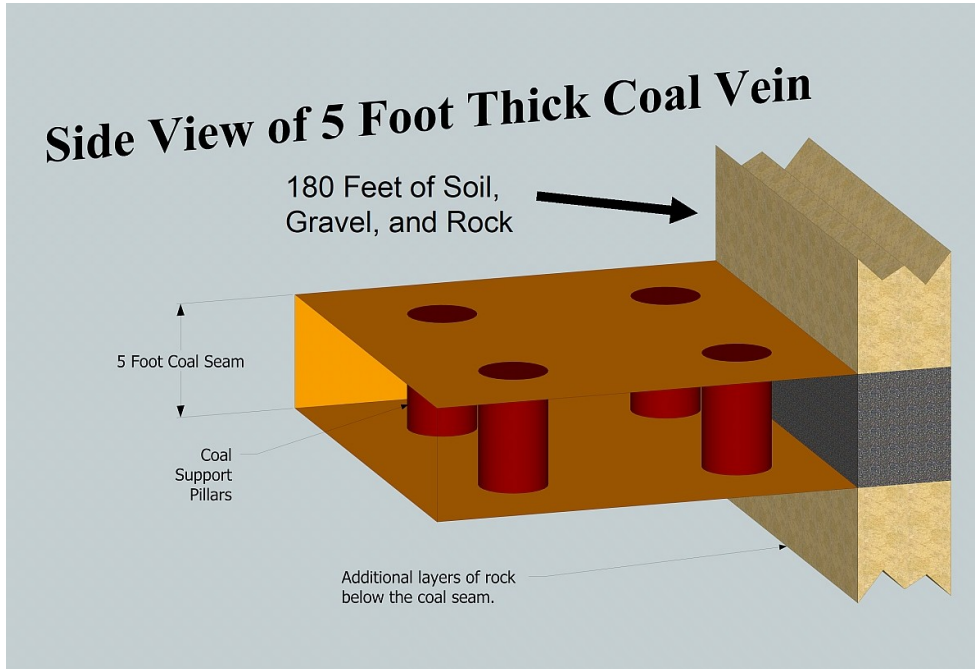
Given that several portions of the City of Fairbury are located on top of abandoned coal mining tunnels, why hasn't there been more sink holes?

The Illinois Geological Survey, at its web site, <http://tinyurl.com/h6ka55s>, defines the different types of coal mine design:

Method This refers to the pattern by which the coal was removed. Most underground mines in Illinois have used a type of room and pillar pattern, the areas where the coal is removed are the 'rooms' with 'pillars' of coal left in place to support the roof. In some mines, the pillars were later pulled to extract additional coal. The abbreviations are listed below and most are illustrated in Figure 1.

RP	Room & Pillar; specific type unknown
RPB	Room & Pillar Basic; irregular panels, typical of old mines
MRP	Modified Room & Pillar; a somewhat more regular pattern than Room & Pillar Basic
RPP	Room and Pillar Panel; similar to Modified Room & Pillar
BRP	Blind Room and Pillar; every 6th or 7th room is left unmined to provide additional support
CRP	Checkerboard Room and Pillar; evenly spaced large pillars
LW	Longwall; all coal is removed
	Old longwall mines were backfilled with rock to provide support
	Modern longwall mines allow roof to collapse behind as mining progresses
HER	High Extraction Retreat; a form of Room & Pillar mining that extracts most of the coal

Later in this same document, they note that Fairbury's coal mines are types unknown, MRP (modified room & pillar), or RP (Room & Pillar). Below is a sketch done by the author showing this room & pillar method:



So if our Fairbury coal miners left the coal pillars in place when they finished mining, the pillars should hold up the ground above....which reduces the probability of sink holes.

[Chapter 16](#)

Newspaper Coverage of Fairbury Coal Mining

Coal Mine Life Spans

According to State of Illinois data, the three Fairbury coal mines were in existence for these time periods:

1881 - 1904 Mine by Honeggers Feed Mill
1886 - 1941 Mine by Timber Ridge Sub-division
1904 - 1925 Mine a mile west of Fairbury

John and Henry Marsh dug their mines around 1862. One closed very quickly, but they dug a 2nd mine in 1864. We can add this data to the information noted above:

1862 - 1864 Two mines by John and Henry Marsh.
1881 - 1904 Mine by Honeggers Feed Mill
1886 - 1941 Mine by Timber Ridge Sub-division
1904 - 1925 Mine a mile west of Fairbury

We also know the East Shaft was in existence from 1867 until 1909.

1862 - 1864 Two mines by John and Henry Marsh.
1867 - 1909 East Shaft by 9th & 10th Streets on Railroad
1881 - 1904 Mine by Honeggers Feed Mill
1886 - 1941 Mine by Timber Ridge Sub-division
1904 - 1925 Mine a mile west of Fairbury

We can now check and see if there were any Fairbury newspapers in existence that would have covered these different coal mines.

From the 1878 history book on Livingston County we find:

<p>John Harper, the great newspaper starter, commenced the publication of the <i>Intelligencer</i> at Fairbury, in 1863, which soon suspended; and Moses Osman published a paper for awhile.</p> <p>In 1866, H. S. Decker commenced the publication of the <i>Journal</i> at Fairbury. He soon after sold to I. P. McDowell, and he to Otis Eastman, in 1867, who continued to publish it until 1873.</p> <p>.</p>	
284	HISTORY OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY.
<p>In June, 1871, the Dimmicks commenced the publication of the <i>Independent</i> at Fairbury, and in 1876 C. B. Holmes commenced the <i>Blade</i>. These papers were published until 1876, when J. S. Scibird became proprietor, and combined the two, with the title of <i>Independent-Blade</i>, which he publishes yet.</p>	

We will summarize the findings from the 1878 history book below:

1863 - 1865?	Intelligencer	No microfilm available
1866 - 1873	Journal	1868 - 1873 Microfilm at Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield
1871 - 1876	Independent	No Microfilm available
1876 - 2016	Independent-Blade	Microfilm available at Dominy Library. Being digitized in late 2016.

If we check the web site for the Illinois Newspaper project, at <http://tinyurl.com/h896c6y>, we find another Fairbury newspaper called the Local Record. Microfilm copies of some issues from 1905 - 1947 are available at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield. We can add this information to the table above:

1863 - 1865?	Intelligencer	No microfilm available
1866 - 1873	Journal	1868 - 1873 Microfilm at Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield
1871 - 1876	Independent	No Microfilm available
1876 - 2016	Independent-Blade	Microfilm available at Dominy Library. Being digitized in late 2016.
1905 - 1947	Local Record	Microfilm at Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield

Intelligencer

Because the Intelligencer was only printed for a year or two, it is unlikely they were ever kept and microfilmed. This would have been the newspaper with the best coverage of the initial coal mines done by John and Henry Marsh. Diane Pawlowski, Echoes Museum Board Member, graciously gave me a copy of an April 3, 1958 Blade reprint of a August 10, 1865 Intelligencer article. This is the only article related to coal mining available from the Intelligencer newspaper. The article is reprinted below:

This growing town in which we have located and where we propose in the future to publish the Intelligencer, is situated on the T.P. & W. R.R., twelve miles east of the junction with the Chicago, Alton-St. Louis R.R. The original town plot was laid out by Cropsey and Chanute in 1857. The first business house was opened about the 1st of January, 1858, by William Mitchell. Soon after Vanemman and Fitch erected a warehouse, and located as grain merchants. In the spring of 1858 Pogue, Amsbary and Thomas opened up a dry goods store in the building now occupied by Jones & Amsbary. During the year improvements went on rapidly. The Morris House and two boarding houses were erected; Patton & Dodds opened a grocery store, the depot was located and building erected by subscriptions from the citizens of the town and vicinity; a lumber yard was established by John Coomer; a drug store by John Blackburn; a wagon making and repairing shop by Smith & Hall; and a blacksmith shop by Jacob Hunt. A Methodist church edifice was erected during the same year. In 1859 a business house was opened by Remington & Gillett in the building now occupied by J.P. and W.S. McDowell. The flouring mill now owned and run so successfully by R.B. Wilson, was erected by W.G. McDowell, and many other smaller improvements were made. In 1860, Pogue and Co. erected the large warehouse now run with such an advantage to the farming community by Dresser & Co. and a fine two-story school house sufficient to accommodate over two hundred scholars with four teachers, was erected. In 1861 another store was opened by Strevell & Oliver, in the building now occupied by H. Remington. Hulsey, Fulton & Co. opened a new drug store, and a Presbyterian church was built. Thus, year after year has our town improved in business houses with proportionate growth in residence, until we now number five dry goods stores, one clothing store, with a fine stock of boots and shoes; four grocery stores, three hardware stores; two furniture stores and all other branches of business proportionately represented. The amount of capital invested is perhaps larger for the size of the place than is to be found in any other town in this portion of the state. Businessmen do business

upon their own capital, mainly; and do a safe as well as an extensive business. The bank of McDowell, Lyman & Co. is a valuable institution for our town while it, no doubt, yields a fine income to the firm. Through this bank exchange can be had for doing business in any direction and the unquestioned integrity of the several members of the firm is a guarantee to those who find it convenient to do business with them.

An important feature of our prosperity remains to be noticed. We refer to the great supply of coal, not only for ourselves but for our neighbors who in the winter at least are quite dependent upon us. In 1859, Mr. J.L. Marsh & Co. bored for coal just west of the town and being successful in finding a workable vein of coal, a shaft was immediately sunk. At a little over two hundred feet from the surface, a vein four feet and ten inches thick, was struck, and the coal found to be of a superior quality.

The town plot has been growing, with the growth of business and the demand for more room. In 1859, J.L. Marsh laid out an addition of 80 acres on the west. In 1863, Caleb Patton laid out an addition on the south. In 1864 A.L. Pogue extended the town plot still farther south and recently I.P. McDowell has laid out an addition on the Northeast, and John Atkins on the South east. Over 300 acres are laid out in town lots and still the cry is for more room, and A.P. Straight, we learn, is about to yield of his farm lying on the southwest. We congratulate those who own land anywhere near to Fairbury. They can soon sell off in town lots.

The morals of the people are well cared for, and those who prefer good, moral society can have it, while we are sorry to say, there is a chance for the accommodation of those whose preference are otherwise. There are four organized religious societies in the place. The Methodist church with Rev. J.G. Evans as pastor, has, we learn, a membership of 150 or upwards, and a large congregation. Their Sunday school, N.E. Lyman, Superintendent, is said to be the finest in the county, having over 200 scholars, and being conducted with ability, and so as to make it interesting to all. The Presbyterian pulpit, if filled by Rev. W.T. Hempstead, a man of education and possessing quite a poetical gift. The Baptist society are erecting a church which they hope to complete soon though they are not without any regular pastor, but have fortunately secured the services of Rev. Mr. Karnes for a short time while they are struggling to finish their house of worship. The Christian (Campbellite) society have for the present the service of H. Spence as pastor. Those wishing to attend Divisional Services have an opportunity of doing so where pulpits are ably filled. But while the churches have been making laudable efforts to moralize the community, there have been here, and still are, influences at work to corrupt the youth, and paralyze the efforts of the good. That bane of human of society, the drinking saloon, has done its mischief here as well as elsewhere. We trust that the day is not far removed when these shall be completely routed out of our pleasant little town. Drinking saloons, even though they pass under the name of "beer saloons", will make drunkards. We bid God speed to the noble band of templars here who are battling the evil of intemperance in all of its hideous forms. We shall hereafter have some thing to say about some needed improvements.

Journal and Local Record Newspapers

At this time, the author has not traveled to the Abraham Lincoln Library in Springfield, to research the microfilm copies available for these newspapers. It is extremely time consuming to research microfilm compared to word searching digitized newspapers.

Because the Journal does not start until 1866, and microfilm is only available after 1868, it will not have coverage of John and Henry Marsh's early coal mining activities in Fairbury.

The April 2, 1881, Independent Blade, carried a reprint of a July 4, 1867, story from the Fairbury Journal newspaper. It tells the story of the East Shaft coal mine being dug.

Fairbury Blade Newspaper

The Blade is now digitized by the Dominy Memorial Library and became available for word searching November 17, 2016. It is likely that more information about Fairbury and coal mining will become available as additional searching of the Blade is performed.

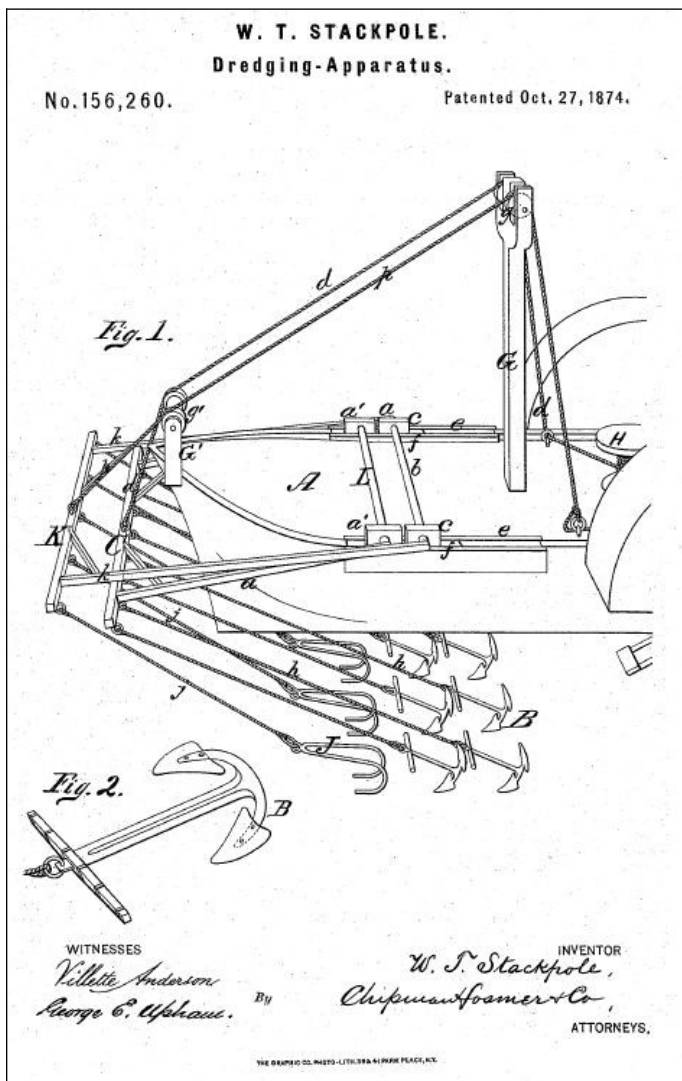
Chapter 17

Stackpole Writings on Coal Mining

William T. Stackpole was one of early Fairbury's most interesting characters. It was said that he made and lost at least three fortunes. There were a few early families in Fairbury that came from the East Coast of the United States. The William Stackpole family was one of these families. They came from Maine.

Patent

Stackpole always had some kind of new business scheme during his life. He got interested in making canals and dredging rivers. He even applied and received a U.S. Patent for a piece of dredging equipment.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

WILLIAM T. STACKPOLE, OF FAIRBURY, ILLINOIS, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF
HIS RIGHT TO ALLAN A. BURTON.

IMPROVEMENT IN DREDGING APPARATUS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 156,260, dated October 27, 1874; application filed
March 3, 1874.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM T. STACKPOLE, of Fairbury, in the county of Livingston and State of Illinois, have invented a new and Improved Device for Reducing Sand, Mud, or Gravel Bars on the waters of the Mississippi and tributaries, or at their mouths, or any other waters, and of deepening the water in creeks, rivers, harbors, estuaries, or shoals in lakes, sea, rivers, &c., of which the following is a specification:

The object of this invention is to deepen rivers, harbors, and other water-ways, and to reduce "bars" of sand, mud, or gravel, which may be formed therein, by the attachment to a vessel, which is propelled by steam or other motive power, of gangs of marine plows or "drags" of suitable construction, which will form channels in the bars or beds and loosen the material of which they are composed, so that it will be loosened and carried off by the natural tides and currents, or by the commotion of the water produced by the wheels used to propel the vessel. My object is also to remove "snags" and other obstructions which may lie upon the surfaces of the bars, or be embedded therein, by the employment, in combination with the marine plows or drags, of one or more gangs of grappling-hooks suitably attached to a hoisting apparatus, as will be hereinafter explained.

The following is a description of my improvements:

In the annexed drawings, A designates the forward part of a side-wheel steamer having my improvements applied over the bow, but in carrying my invention into effect I contemplate its application to any of the well-known vessels which are propelled by side wheels or stern wheels. B designates a gang of anchor-shaped plows, which are suitably yoked together and respectively connected to a strong beam, C, by means of ropes or chains *h*. The beam C is rigidly braced to two vertically-vibrating arms, *a a*, which are secured to the ends of a rock-shaft, *b*, that has its bearings in blocks *e e*. These blocks *e e* are held down in place in grooved ways *e e*, constructed on the gunnels of the vessel, and are allowed end-wise adjustment in the ways. In rear of the

bearing-blocks *e e* I apply blocks of india-rubber or other suitable springs, indicated by letters *f f*, the object of which springs is to allow the blocks to yield in the event of the plows B meeting with any great obstruction, which would be liable to break them or derange the machinery. To the beam C a chain, *d*, is attached, which is carried over one of two pulleys, *g*, at the upper end of a substantial standard, G, and thence passed around a windlass, H. By these means the plows B can be raised and depressed and hauled inboard. At the bow of the vessel I shall also erect a standard, G', with pulleys *g'* on its upper end, over which I shall carry the chain *d*, as shown in the drawing. Each one of the anchors B I shall construct with two broad shovel-shaped flukes, which will form channels in the bars and loosen up the earthy deposits; and these anchors B I shall connect together by means of steel yokes or short ropes, applied either to their eyes, their stocks, or their flukes or shovels, for the purpose of keeping the channels formed by them parallel to each other and at even distances apart. In other words, the yokes referred to keep the anchors from spreading or being directed out of their true course. Gangs of anchor-shovels may be applied, as above described, to both ends of a boat and to the sides thereof, in which case the boat can be moved forward and backward over a bar without having to turn the boat around, thus saving time and labor.

During the operation of plowing up the earthy deposit and stirring the same, the paddle-wheels which propel the vessel will materially aid in removing the deposit and suspending it in the water, to be carried off by the natural currents. When the water is very deep the vessel should be so freighted or ballasted with water, or other ballast, that the paddle-wheels or propeller will be brought very near the shoal or bar being dredged. The drag may be made on the principle of the harrow or plow. If of the latter, I retain the anchor principle, as described, and if of the former, the teeth or scarifiers may be secured to a suitable frame, properly loaded to keep it down to its work. When the bottom is supposed to be obstructed with sunken logs,

(snags,) or other bodies embedded in the earthy deposit, I employ a gang of hooks, J, of suitable construction, which are connected together by means of metal rods or rope-ties j, and which are, respectively, attached to a strong beam, K, on the ends of vertically-vibrating arms k k. These arms k k are secured to the extremities of a rock-shaft, L, which has its bearings in the ways e e, and which may have springs applied to them, as described, for the blocks c c. The beam K with its grappling-hooks J can be raised or depressed by means of a chain or a rope, p, which is carried over a pulley on each one of the standards G G', and attached to a capstan or windlass, like the chain or rope d. The grappling-hooks will precede the plows and clear the way of obstructions, and as often as a load of snags is gathered the said hooks will be elevated and the load deposited in the vessel A, or in a flat-boat drawn by the same.

In deep-water dredging—with still deeper water on each side of the bar or shoal—the anchor plow-beam may be brought under the vessel's bottom and made to rest solidly against the keel, and there held by means of a cable fastened to a ring-bolt on the deck.

The anchor-plow and grappling-hook beams, if worked under water, will tend to materially

increase the swell caused by the passage of the vessel, and thus the reflux of water will greatly aid the motion the machinery has induced in removing the newly-plowed earth, and in holding the loosened particles in solution for outflowing tides and currents to bear away.

Having described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The combination, with an elevating-frame and its operating mechanism, of one or more gangs of submarine drags, B, flexibly connected, and independently applied to the said elevating-frame, substantially as described.

2. One or more gangs of grappling-hooks, J, combined with one or more gangs of submarine plows, B, and with an elevating apparatus, substantially as and for the purposes herein described.

3. Spring-cushions f f in the grooved ways e e, in combination with the rock-shaft blocks c c of the apparatus for elevating the gang of submarine plows B.

WILLIAM T. STACKPOLE.

Attest:

C. W. FAWKNEE,
B. F. BURCH.

Fairbury House

Stackpole's house in Fairbury was one of the first houses built in Fairbury. It is still standing today. It is across the street east of the south-east corner of Marsh Park:



The William Stackpole house, now modernized, still faces Marsh Park. Put together with handmade nails like spikes, it was intended to be cyclone - proof.

Biography

A biography of William Stackpole appeared in *The History of Livingston County, Illinois* book by W.M. LeBaron published in 1878.

WILLIAM T. STACKPOLE, real estate, Fairbury; born in Thomaston, Lincoln Co., Me., Dec 18, 1827, but removed to Illinois in early childhood, with his parents, who settled in Tazewell Co., in the early Fall of 1832, where the subject of this sketch resided until 1849; in the Spring of that year he started for the gold fields of California, leaving his brothers home in Pike Col, April 4th, the party reaching the western slope of the Sierra Nevada's on the 8th day of September; he returned to Pekin, Illinois, in March 1851, where he built a warehouse and engaged in the produce business the following Fall, afterward connecting with it lumber and boating; subsequently he opened a coal mine; also improved a fruit farm of about 3,000 trees, in Peoria Co., opposite Pekin; this property is now known as Orchard Mines; in 1853, he purchased a large tract of land in what is now Anchor Township, McLean Co., and two years later commenced improving the same, being the pioneer in that township.

Mr. S. has taken an active interest in inland navigation in this country, having written many articles for the press on this important subject, and at the meeting of the Corporators of the Illinois River Improvement Company, held at St. Louis March 18, 1857. He was the first to call the attention of that body to the fact that the charter of said

company was not in conformity to the compact of 1787; removed to Fairbury, his present home, in October, 1861.

Married in 1856, to Miss Jennie S. Harlow. who was born in Watertown, N. Y.; four children by this union, one living Anna S.; lost three-Willie G., died Sept. 15, 1867; Mary L., Nov. 15, 1870; Isabella E., Oct. 7, 1871.

Pioneer Farmer in Anchor Township

An October 30, 1926, special history story in the Bloomington Pantagraph described how William Stackpole was a pioneer farmer in Anchor Township, south of Fairbury.

SOME CHOICE BITS OF EARLY HISTORY DEALING WITH ANCHOR TOWNSHIP

Was a Part of Cropsey Town-ship at the Beginning of Its Organization—William Stack-pole of Pekin Was the First Man to Begin Farming Operations There—Wild Life Was Plentiful and Deer Roamed the Prairies in Herds.

Early history of Anchor township from point of Interest, compares favorably with any in the county. It is located in the easternmost of the middle tier of townships and is bounded on the east by Ford county; south by Cheney's Grove township, the west by Martin and on the north by Cropsey township.

During most of its history it has been a part of Cropsey and of course, it is much blended with that. The first man to commence farming operations there was William T. Stack-pole, a resident of Pekin, doing a grain and produce business on the Illinois river, then the only line of transportation known in this section of the state.

Buys 2,320 Acres

In the spring of 1855 Mr. Stack-pole came from Pekin with three teams to commence work on a large tract of land, including 2,320 acres, which he had purchased from the government. Twenty years later, while furnishing some data for a McLean county history, Mr. Stackpole wrote:

"I cannot forebear referring to the peculiar natural beauty of that prairie, the very heart of the 'Grand Prairie' of Illinois, In a state of nature as I saw it on that May morning in the spring of 1855 when I went with my men to begin my improvements. Then again on September 1, when its rich vegetation had reached its fulfillment. Not even a furrow of its virgin soil, nor even a spadeful of its earth, except by the United States surveyors, had ever been turned by man. To that date not even a shanty by white man or Indian had ever been erected within the bounds of Anchor township."

"Every foot of its soil was prairie except the small grove of two acres in the southwest quarter of section 5 then known as Cunningham's Bunch". The wide open prairie was shunned by the early settlers and their first occupation and cultivation were surrounded by serious difficulties in some respects."

Most Troublesome Enemies

Rattlesnakes, greenheads, and mosquitoes were the most troublesome enemies that engaged the new farmer. For two or three years prairie wolves were troublesome but these minor objections shrunk into insignificance compared with the terrible prairie fires. No loss of human life was ever known to occur but there was great loss of property. Grass grew to a height of eight feet giving great opportunity to the devouring element.

In the year 1859 Mr. Stackpole had 1,100 acres in grain, mostly in wheat which proved that year a failure. Up to this time, however, all his undertakings had been quite successful. The farm had been stocked with many cattle and sheep.

Deer Found in Herds

Deer, in those days, were so numerous that it, was not uncommon to see them in herds of from 5 to 50. The skeleton of a buffalo, the American bison, was found on the farm of Mr. Stackpole.

Disasters of the first year of the Civil war finished what the former uncontrollable events had commenced in the way of reverses for Mr. Stackpole and in the year 1863, his land was sold out under a mortgage and he left penniless.

Other Settlers in the Township

Many other men helped, to make the history of the township, among whom were John Sharpless who came from Indiana; a Dr. Sabin who purchased a part of the Stackpole property; A. R. Jones, who commenced a great cattle-feeding and farming enterprise in 1865; John Ingram who came from Canada in the year 1866; Nathaniel Brinley who came in 1867; Henry Gilstrap who came from White Oak township; Moses H. Knight, a Christian preacher; R. H. Arnold from White Oak Grove; W. H. and F. M. Anderson from Martin township; Maj. J. B. T. Mann, an officer in the Mexican war who started a nursery in section 4; J. B. Pierce of Danvers township, John N. King and John P. Worley who came In the year 1868; and J. T. Tanner who came In the year 1869.

Three Fortunes Made and Lost

His first fortune was probably made in his shipping business on the Illinois River in Pekin. He then bought farm land in Anchor, and was one of the pioneering families to live in Anchor. He lost this Anchor farm land, and moved a little north to Fairbury. Fairbury was just getting started, so he probably made a great deal of money selling real estate. He must have lost this money, because he ended up the last part of his life in Chicago. A Chicago newspaper carried his idea of using a massive dome in the 1893 Chicago Columbia Exposition in 1893.

While in Chicago, he published about five quarterly magazines. He often was a contributing author to these magazines. One of these magazines is located at the Illinois State University Special Collections room in Milner Library.

Coal Mining Story

Stackpole wrote a book or story in 1887 in Fairbury titled *The Illinois Coal Field, as a Factor in the Destiny of Nations*. There is a microfilm copy at the Library of Congress:

the original paper bound Blade books at the Echoes Museum, and that particular year is completely missing from the collection.

The LOC copy of the front page was then transcribed into modern typed text. The transcription appears below.

February 11, 1887

Fairbury Blade

THE ILLINOIS COAL FIELD,

As a Factor in the Destiny of Nations

Copyrighted.

He who can only see in coal a mere substitute for wood in his winter's fuel, or in the great central coal fields of our country only a supply of fuel for those of the people of Illinois who use it either for convenience or economy, either in their houses or manufactories, will fail to get correct views as to a most vital part in the physical formation of our country and this hemisphere.

The physician now who did not study and understand the anatomy of the human body, and the uses of the various organs, would not be trusted by many.

So the statesman who would promote the welfare of his country must understand its resources, its needs and its great economics, as prepared for by nature. And he cannot legislate to promote the common welfare, prosperity, safety, and happiness of his country and its people, if he does not take wide views abroad over the world of commerce, and of human advancements in other lands, as well as his own. The steam engine, on land and on water, and the telegraph crossing continents and seas, have advanced that dominion and subjugation of the forces and resources of nature, which was once among the first promises and commandments given by God to man.

Never was true, high statesmanship more needed than now. But its beginnings must be with the people. Says our representative, Hon. Lewis E. Payson, in the halls of Congress "We as their representatives may be well content if we crystallize into statute and insist upon the performance, through proper legislation, of their deliberate judgment." How necessary then it is that those who own, or those who dwell upon this vast coal field, and others abroad, should realize that great destiny that appears to be written upon it by the hand of God, if we will but do our part, and our duty concerning it.

Our country happily has large and ample stores of coal in several states; far surpassing Europe in this respect. And if that in Illinois were blotted out of existence, the loss might not be absolutely ruinous. But the great and beneficent economies, so grandly prepared by nature, in this interior, would then be rendered absolutely impassable. And the grand results now practicable, to our country and to mankind, would then become impracticable; and the dominion of evil policies over the world would be assured, at least as far as human means extend.

And even the omnipotent God himself works by physical and material instrumentalities, as well as spiritual.

That the coal of England, has been a great factor, in maintaining and advancing her power, dominion, and wealth to its present vast dimensions, none can deny. The abuse of that power and wealth, is not from the resource of nature and labor—but the corrupt heart of man—and from Toryism. The mineral resources stored in the Earth's fruitful bosom, are material means for man's temporal and eternal advancement, and through eons of ages they have been prepared therefore. The miner, groping with his lamp in the dark depths of mines of coal, of copper, silver, gold, iron, lead, etc. and the scientist in his closet, alike realize this. And the theologian and the statesman, ere long will more fully and more practically apply these facts, revealed in nature, than has yet been done.

England holds now pre-eminently the money power of the modern world, and no part of the world escapes its influence. In her own dark deep mines, and under the burning sun of India and Africa, the Tory sway means oppression and robbery, as the word itself implies. Three hundred

millions of people are held in one vast empire in which the sun never sets. The revolving earth gives broad daylight constantly in some countries of that empire. More than six thousand millions of foreign mortgages and bonds are daily adding interest on interest to that power whose influence is so mighty as to penetrate every land on Earth, and every government and every cabinet of the modern world. To suppose that we can escape it is but childish folly. Corrupting and Tory influences must be eliminated by plain measures. To suppose that we are not injured by its grasp on our literature and language is to deny the plainest evidence. To suppose that the plain measures we need, for that safe and true advance, which our country and the world requires, can ever be reached by drifting on the muddy current of party contests, and tales of the glories of fratricidal war, is to discard all reason and all human experience.

We have a record of vast efforts by our people—and of achievements and production unsurpassed. But debt and poverty have steadily increased. The annual drain to Trans-Atlantic holders of mortgages, etc., for interest alone, is something stupendous, being over one hundred and fifty millions, or over three millions per week on an average. The misleading statements as to trade balances in our favor, published for years, makes no mention of anything but produce, goods, etc., and so the great errors are spread over our land and perpetuated. And, with countries to the south of us in this hemisphere, there is an annual trade balance against us, of over one hundred millions each year, which is paid in "Sterling exchange." Thus the ceaseless drain goes on, and the outward semblance of prosperity is accepted as reality. Our ocean navigation is almost swept from the seas, our commerce is dwarfed to dependence on an island, which controls all our markets, and the very foundation of our finances is sought to be subverted, while the arm of maritime power has rotted off.

Against the errors that have been committed, God has given us a defense in physical instrumentalities. These, prepared in nature, are beyond the power of human error to wholly destroy. And among them the Illinois coal field, flanked by the ores of Missouri and Lake Superior, is among the greatest and most constant and safe defenses.

There are passages in the sublime prophetic poems in the sacred books of the old testament (not yet understood or rightly studied) which seem to point to the steam engines with peculiar accuracy, as leading instrumentalities in our own times. If this is doubted or denied and men prefer to "seek truth's higher glances" without the help of this "lamp unto my feet" they must admit nevertheless, the influence of the steam engine upon mankind, and the astonishing results it has already wrought; and yet its extended use is but as it were, a thing of yesterday in even the historic period of the world. In our country and in the world, the epoch of this instrument of power is within the memory of many men and women still living. But the man is not yet born amongst us who can foretell or limit even the reasonable probabilities of its future, in its influence upon the human race. In Asia, Austral-Asia, Africa, South American, North American, in our own country and even in Europe, vast tracts of country are still but a savage wilderness, needing all the light of Christianity and the appliances of civilization.

The steam engine is now interlocked with human advancement in a thousand ways; and the poverty and necessities of three fourths at least of the human race, require a far greater command over the forces and resources of nature and art, than has yet been gained; and also a far more beneficent, extended, and just distribution than can be possible from the present existing focus, on a Trans-Atlantic island, north of the fiftieth parallel of north latitude, whose resources in the bosom of the earth are so scanty, and whose oppression of the poor is denounced and condemned from so many places in that old Bible, which is indeed the true and mighty friend of the poor throughout the whole world. England's annual "output" of coal has now reached the enormous amount of over one hundred and sixty millions of tons. To realize even in a slight degree, what this is, and what it implies, some illustration is necessary. Rail cars and trains are now familiar objects, and we will use them for illustration of the magnitude of England's freightage of the one

item of coal upon and from that island. If we assume that twenty of our large cars with locomotive, tender, and a caboose, would form a train one sixth of a mile in length, and that each car would carry an average of fifteen tons of coal, then one mile of closely packed trains would carry just 1800 tons, and it would then require 88,888 miles of such trains to move the one hundred and sixty millions of tons—of that item of heavy freight. The annual "output" of coal in the whole United States, is about one-third of that amount. Even that would require over thirty tracks loading from Chicago to New York, and closely packed with trains touching each other, to contain it. The whole annual grain deliveries at Chicago and New Orleans combined, only aggregate to about four millions of tons.

Yes, while the coal mines of that island are as yet far more important than any others in Europe, in the eastern hemisphere, or the world; yet their area is not great and their duration is known to be limited. But what that duration may be, is another and more difficult question. Upon its perhaps depends, under God, many of the great and unknown changes of the future, in Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, Australia, and the islands of the seas. The whole area of the coal fields of the island of Great Britain, including what is worked out, has been variously estimated at from eleven to twelve thousand square miles. A few years ago, a labored report of a committee of the British parliament estimated that the supply remaining, at the then rate of consumption was sufficient for five hundred years. And another estimated placed it at eight hundred years. But in view of the comparatively short period in which the amount annually mined has been large; the great area known to be now exhausted, the increasing difficulties, hazards, and hardships of mining, and the loss of life; together with the apprehension of failure, and the many discussions of the possibility of substituting other resources for heat and for power, it would seem altogether probably that neither estimate was worthy of much attention. And it would seem wise and right for the people of both that island, and our country, to seek in a high and true spirit, for the pathways for a more beneficent, just, and safe advance than either has yet known. But Toryism in any form, on either side of the Atlantic, and not matter under what name, pretense or disguise, will never lead us into the path of true personal, local, national and cosmic advance, which we need, and which the world needs.

Says the Great Book: "Men do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles." The fruits of England's power and wealth, proceeding largely from her mines of coal and iron, have perhaps been good in part, but that a scanty part indeed. And over all has been written, almost boundless wealth and luxury to a few, and the direst poverty, misery and degradation to the many, even in that splendid island and far worse in Ireland, and worst of all in India, where woe and famine are virtually established by British law, and enforced by British power and money. The world knows the past in part at least. And it looks to Columbia for better things. And it must not look in vain.

To us, by the Great Ruler of the universe, much is given. And of us, as his stewards, much will be required. On the basis of equity we should build up commerce with all the

world, that should assure a sound and reasonable prosperity to our country and to its people. The coal of England should be husbanded with wise and frugal care. That of this country should be developed on true principles.

The area of coal in Pennsylvania in its original state, was about the same as in Great Britain. Several other states of our Union have large coal supplies, in some cases with iron and other minerals quite near. But the Illinois coal field (extending also into Indiana) has in this state alone, an area of over thirty-seven thousand square miles—being more than three times that of Great Britain, before their mining began, yielding probably a greater average of tons to the square mile, and with less labor in bringing it to the surface, and that with less hazard and hardship to the miner. The quality of the Illinois coal has always been, still is, and perhaps for some time to come may continue to be, under-rated. Early in 1860 the author of this paper advocated in a course of

articles in the leading paper in Chicago (and another course in the press of Peoria about the same time) the reduction of the ores of Missouri and Lake Superior, with the coal of Illinois. But, except with a few, the very idea was considered visionary and the belief was quite general that we could make iron with Pennsylvania coal. But now, great furnaces and rolling mills, at St. Louis, Chicago, Grand Tower, Joliet, and other places, have so long wrought out their great results by the use of Illinois coal, results that would rejoice the very soul of Tubel-Cain, and all the metal workers of the past, that it is not necessary to say much as to the quality of coal in this great central field, which is the very citadel of our National power by nature. The great city paper soon after changed owners, and later was greatly enlarged in size, until finally every day's issue came to contain enough to make a good sized book. But from a solid cord of its files, it would be impossible to find out that the vast resources represented by the Illinois coal field, and the various minerals of the great lake or river regions by which it is almost surrounded, had any existence, that they were to be developed or were undergoing development, or were matters of any interest or importance. And the neglect or betrayal of the most practical things has been quite general in current literature. And while whole hecatombs of our business men have been annually slaughtered, in every line, our inland navigation—so vital to the economic blending and distribution of those resources—has been kept obstructed and disconnected, and financial stability and safety to our greatest interests has not been reached, our foreign commerce has been kept back, dwarfed, emasculated of the vital force of which it gave once such high promise, and now stands as a mere adjunct to British commerce, which fixes the price of nearly all our productions. The decline of our navigation is almost unparalleled in history. Of nearly sixteen-hundred vessels which touched at the port of Gibraltar in the last quarter of the year 1883, not one carried our flag, not one. And this at the entrance of the Mediterranean, that great historic highway of mankind, from which it was the peculiar and remarkable destiny of our country—in the very childhood of its material power, to sweep away the barbarous piracy which had been permitted there for ages. But we must arouse and break these bands of error that have been placed upon us, and that have ruined so many of our people, and have at times almost paralyzed the healthiest and sounded enterprises and industries at home, and so have dwarfed or destroyed those we might have undertaken abroad. The very earth, over all the world, seems to cry out for relief from robbery, and for the advance of honorable enterprise, and industries, on the sound and true Christian basis of reciprocal and mutual benefits.

Two most wonder events on this planet, both of recent occurrence, and incomplete, belong with our theme. The scene of each is far removed from Illinois, and yet both are destined to affect our country, and other countries. A new book is to be opened, and to us it is given to assist in the opening, if we will but do our many duty to ourselves and others. A change, proceeding from the very heart of nature, shown on the heaving bosom of the Atlantic, has occurred in that warm oceanic river, which has given to the British Islands, winters as mild as Tennessee, in a latitude north of Lake Superior. This change finds little or not place in current literature, and there are most powerful reasons for this. hence we know little about it. A few short paragraphs, a magazine article, one or more newspaper articles, seem to be about the sum of all our literature records, of a physical change in the planet we inhabit, the most momentous that has occurred in a thousand years, and that may be felt for centuries. But we know that a change in that current could not occur without affecting the climate of those islands. And we know that from 1876 to 1886 including both years, the crops have been short. And this condition seems to be accepted as fixed and permanent.

And concurrent with this, has been demonstrated the invincible power of money, in a corrupted and perverted commerce, to rule the markets of the world. For in the very teeth of a demand for wheat, at that great centre, unprecedented in the annals of commerce; both as to the magnitude and duration, and of a world's supply not at all in excess of actual needs; the price for years has been kept below the average cost of production, to the ruin of millions of producers.

France, Germany, and other countries, have protected their wheat growers from ruin by duties on imported wheat, and the farms of the great majority of the wheat growers of our country have been covered with mortgages or sold to new men. On the so-called Boards of Trade, most of the fortunes have been made on the "bear" side, to the ruin of the "bulls" and "countrymen." All this has been in accord with, and proceeding from STATE POLICIES. The "noble Lords" can look with calmness upon the ruin of the English, Irish, or Scotch tenant farmers. But, as matters now stand, and with the implements of destruction that now exist, they will not risk a London mob of hundreds of thousands of bold daring men, desperate, and thoroughly infuriated, from the inability to get bread. Tory rule however can be borne, while bread is cheap, and the fiat went forth that it should be cheap.

For this the gentle Hindoo must toll under the blazing sun of India, plow the land with a pair of little half-staved bullocks, and sell his scanty crop of about six bushels to the acre, at about twenty cents per bushel. He cannot be permitted to eat the crop he has produced, or give it to his family to eat. It is required to pay the rent and taxes, which government demands and enforces. *He is compelled to eat the weeds that grow among the wheat.* If he is very fortunate, he may be able in some good year, to have the village silversmith come to his little dwelling, and comfort his family with some little trinkets, manufactured in their presence from one or more silver rupees. No wonder that hunger and dreadful famine, have engendered in India a fearful hate of the English rule. Six millions of white people, according to Miss Nightingale, died there in a single year from famine. When will the world realize these unutterable horrors and woes, and terminate them? And even the government admitted that two millions had [illegible] perished. And these are a most interesting people, of our own race, but changed by climate, and long oppression. Even on salt, a prime necessity of life, the poorest are compelled to pay a tax amounting to thirty times its value—according to J. Seymour Keay in his work—"The spoliation of India."

Thus, while the press teems with accounts of the long struggle for reforms, so tardily granted and so much needed in the British islands, India is a far greater sufferer from Tory policies and robbery. It is quite right to say, in the face of a perverted literature and a corrupted commerce, that these policies are hated by the great majority of mankind—and that they violate the laws of humanity and of God, and the teachings of Christ. And nature herself, in the great warm current of the sea, seems to withdraw her long continued favor and kindness from the "fast anchored isle," which is the citadel and stronghold of the greatest empire the world has ever known. But we stand on the verge of great cosmic changes, and for these it is our duty to now prepare, and wisely advance, on right and true lines, correspondent with reason, and with revelation.

THE NEXT GREAT EVENT

Is the work of man—yet wonderfully prepared for in nature, justified by economic science, and experience, discussed more or less for three hundred years, and seemingly foreshadowed in a prophetic poem in the sacred books. This is the canal at the Isthmus of Darien, which will connect the two great oceans.

The canal at the Isthmus of Suez, may properly be termed the gateway of the Eastern Hemisphere; and this at Darien is its true counterpart, and is of equal importance to mankind.

And each will increase the benefits and importance of the other. And by these gates of the world the waters and of the land, —the race will have, for the first time since creation, an easy pathway around the world north of the equator.

The changes which this new work will cause in the relative positions of nations, and their resources; and in commerce and human intercourse; and in adding to the resources of mankind, will make it far surpass in importance any commercial event in this hemisphere since the voyage of Columbus. By it our ports, and every rod of our coasts, will be brought practically nearer, to about half the world, by an average of about ten thousand miles.

Thus, commercially, we will have, (if we rightly advance and up build our navigation inland and ocean,) the opportunity to trade with the world on better terms for us and for them, than has ever before been possible. And our influence as a nation, —for good or for evil, according to the course we pursue, will be increased correspondingly.

France is not doing this work as a gift to us, as was the inestimable aid of her recognition, and her fleets and armies, and money, to help us gain a National existence; but our ships will use it on the same terms as those of other countries. And by the opening of these new pathways, our prosperity and power will be promoted, —if we but do our part, and our gratitude to France, should not perish, but rather increase. Advancing on all the lines of honorable commerce, and a true civilization, we should propose to Christendom, PEACE, AND THE BANISHMENT OF FAMINE FROM THE HUMAN RACE.

Under wise policies the whole vast sum of American securities, held abroad could be reduced by one half in a few years; and the deadly drain for interest abroad be abated. And if we adopt the policy of getting the National debt into the hands of all classes of our people, and retaining it permanently, and restore forever to the people, their inalienable and indefensible right of unlimited coinage of both silver and gold, at United States mints, our finances will be placed beyond the reach of tinkers, and of corrupting influences from the money changers of the world.

When we discovered and mined gold in California they proposed to demonetize gold. Then when we discovered and mined silver they proposed to demonetize silver. The arguments in favor of each theory were equally false and misleading, and were founded and built up on errors.

The unvarying record of the mining history of the world, for four thousand years, has ever given the same results, and there is no reason to believe that the future will change it. It is that all efforts of man have never been able to produce more silver and gold than is required, and that an over-production of these metals, is, in a true and cosmic sense, simply impossible. Asia alone, requires more silver than we can furnish in a hundred years. The French people possess per capita, about four times the amount of specie we have, and no one there thinks they have too much. The fact is the world needs more mining for these metals, and needs the product to lessen the poverty of mankind, and promote human advancement, and the stability and safety of all business.

This is a great cosmic need, and a constant one. And we should forever reject all theories of over-production.

And our country is so situated that wide cosmic views will tend to the right solution of National and local questions, and this in almost every branch of our affairs.

Our own requirement [illegible] West Indies, touch very directly the importance of the Illinois coal field, as destined to be a mighty factor in human industries and human commerce.

Prof. J. B. Turner, says, in a private letter to the writer, from which—without asking his consent, I take the liberty of making an extract, because of its public value at this time, when the conditional cession of the Illinois & Michigan canal to the United States voted by the people in 1882, is being allowed to expire, by errors that cannot be explained. He says, "The world of commerce has three great enterprises before it; the one wholly *political* on the Eastern continent, the opening of the Black Sea and Constantinople, the Queen city of the world to the commerce of the nations, and the other wholly *economical* and in the west; namely, the opening of the *great*

Lakes and the *two oceans* across the Isthmus. The world can never rest in any rational equilibrium till all of these are accomplished. The opening of the great Lakes is to us by far the cheapest and most urgent of the three; it will cost no foreign negotiations, frightful wars and rivers of blood; only a small fraction of common sense, and a little peaceful dirt shoveling and blasting with dynamite; paying back in the long-run, both in peace and war, ten times its cost."

We have no better thinkers than Prof. Turner, of Illinois.—

And here he gives a distinct and original idea of the greatest changes and a beneficent advancement of mankind, through material, natural, and physical agencies; prepared in nature from the beginning, but not enjoyed.

And it is indeed remarkable, and most wonderful, that the same idea precisely, and the same foreshadowing of results that seem now near at hand is given in a peculiar verse, in a prophetic poem, of one of the sacred books, that have been so wonderfully preserved in the past; and in the future seems destined to outlast all other literature.

The best description of modern railway trains that exists, for brevity, accuracy, and power, is by one of the poet prophets of ancient and mighty Asia, is that vision which touches both ancient and modern times, and spans oceans and continents.

It is reasonable to suppose that the "book of the visions" he describes, will not be fully understood until it is completely fulfilled.

The mistakes of the commentators are therefore very natural, for they, in the main, have supposed it already fulfilled, because in the poem Nineveh is mentioned, especially, and no modern city by name. But it is cosmic, as well as local, and modern, as well as ancient.

After the description which *perfectly fits our railways*, and cannot be made to fit anything else that ever existed on this planet, —comes the pregnant verse which contains the cosmic idea of Turner. It reads, "The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved."

It is luminous, but its mystic power cannot all be now understood or explained. And doubtless its meaning manifold.

But—from the shores of the Pacific (where he is passing the winter) the Professor's letter brings the same cosmic view of facts to the fields of Illinois.

There are three notable coal fields now pre-eminent in the world, and pregnant with different degrees of undeveloped heat and power. They are those of England, Pennsylvania, and of Illinois.

No discoveries of any new substance, or art, or power, have lessened their importance. On the contrary that importance has steadily increased, save the exhaustion, it is now known, must fix the seal of decline upon that of England, in a period more or less distant in the future, but long before that of even Pennsylvania, which in turn, will see decline long before that of Illinois.

Duration and greatness, far beyond those toward the east, seems written over this great central coal field of the Mississippi valley, and of all our country. And happily this,—alone of the three great fields;—is free from power of monopoly. and not only is it free, but it is difficult to see how monopoly can ever grasp it fully; or even approximate such a clutch as that in which the miners of England and Pennsylvania are held, and which also affects the world at large both at home and abroad. This is not all due to its immense size, for these are days when avarice is as vigorous as ever, and notwithstanding Christianity on the one hand, and dynamite and death on the other; a syndicate might be formed in London, New York, and Chicago, to acquire the mining right of nearly all this vast coal field, and keep it in their clutches, until some revolution dissolved their hold upon it. But happily this central empire of coal, is also a very fruitful and desirable land—mostly—and is nearly all well cultivated, and owned chiefly by the cultivators of the soil, whose

homes and farms are upon its surface. Exclusive of town, city, and village lots, there must be nearly or quite 250,000 owners of the Illinois coal fields,—representing with their families at least one million persons. Their fee simply is absolute and complete, and relates not to "the crown," as in Great Britain. THEY OWN IT—and it is well that they do. They are sovereigns, and far too numerous to be captured by any monopoly on earth.

And [illegible] mining rights, sufficient for any one mining company, are easily and cheaply acquired, at a very reasonable royalty of, the actual "output" of coal from the shaft. And village and town lots, are usually so cheap, that a majority of the miners buy them, and own their home.

And in most localities, these conditions seem not only to prevail now, generally, but to rest on the basis of permanency and of mutual and established interests and good will. The present favorable conditions in this regard, seem as fixed and well established as anything can be.

The word feudal means hate, and such has been its common attribute, especially with the unfortunate miners of that island. There, in the British islands, the land reform proposed by Mr. George, may be needed. But it is not needed here. And even there, nothing but a mighty revolution can apply it. And yet the monopoly "palaces" of these islands can truly be "dissolved," by right plain common sense policies and measures in other lands, measures correspondent at once with nature, with peace, and with law, human and divine, and indicated by the profound utterances already quoted. Great and new migrations of people are to occur; perhaps (in Europe) toward the east, and Asia minor; perhaps from our land toward the far south and Asia proper.

A Trans-Pacific Railroad from the Sea of Japan to the Caspian, is now wanted, and it should be built by Americans with American steel rails, under the auspices of China, Russia, Japan, and Corea;—the rails, etc., to be delivered on that distant shore by our Ocean and Lake vessels, by way of the canal soon to be opened at Darien, and—let us hope—in Illinois also. With the line rightly opened from Lake to Gulf, our coal can be delivered at tide water, at a freight of from 50 to 75 cents per ton, and at Duluth during half the year for much less, and from Duluth to Darien it will be wanted in immense quantities.

The Coat of Arms of Illinois represents an eagle on a rock in the midst of the sea. It was not then expected that the land and sea would both resound with mighty engines, nursed into power by a product from her bosom; but so it will be, and on land and sea a greater meaning will rest upon that ensign of our state and nation.

The greatest poems yet given to the literature of this planet, have been provided by the church so as to allot to each day of the month a part. In them is contained a brief and peculiar passage which includes a promise and command as to principles in human existence, and the only perfect type in all literature of the most dangerous power on earth. The number of the day in which this is given, is the day of the month in which Illinois became a state. And the same number is repeated twice in the year of our Lord, thus occurring three times in the date of our state's nativity. Doubtless this will be to some but a trifle, colored strongly with superstition. But who can tell the mysteries of the past, the present, and the future; or the mystic foreshadowing of destiny that God permits to be given to man?

We all hope and believe that a great and good destiny is before our country. And none will deny the importance to mankind of the valley of the Mississippi, and that it is and must ever be, in war and peace, the very citadel of our country's resources and power.

And in considering that great preparation, so grandly described by De-Tocqueville, it would be the most unwise to fail to bear in mind the office to be fulfilled by its highways and its mineral deposits, and especially the future place in the great economy of the coal fields of Illinois.

Statesman must realize their country's physical structure, if they would promote the welfare, safety, and happiness of her people, and that just advance which the people of all nations desire.

W. T. Stackpole

Historical Perspective on Stackpole's February 11, 1887 Article

It is helpful to understanding Stackpole's viewpoint by reviewing some historical facts and Stackpole's perspective about those facts.

Who was Tubel-Cain? It is a reference to a man in the Bible, who was a blacksmith.

Who was Alexis de Tocqueville? He was a French citizen (1805 - 1859), who made two visits to America. He wrote about his observations and published two books. His observations are a good snapshot in time of life in America.

Was the Isthmus of Darien the Panama Canal? The Isthmus of Panama, also historically known as the Isthmus of Darien, is the narrow strip of land that lies between the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean, linking North and South America. It contains the country of Panama and the Panama Canal. Like many isthmuses, it is a location of great strategic value.

Did the French start the Panama Canal? Ferdinand Marie, Vicomte de Lesseps, (November 1805 – 7 December 1894) was a French diplomat and later developer of the Suez Canal, which in 1869 joined the Mediterranean and Red Seas, substantially reducing sailing distances and times between Europe and East Asia. He attempted to repeat this success with an effort to build a Panama Canal at sea level during the 1880s, but the project was devastated by epidemics of malaria and yellow fever in the area, as well as beset by financial problems, and the planned de Lesseps Panama Canal was never completed. Eventually, the project was bought out by the United States, which solved the medical problems and changed the design to a non-sea level canal with locks. It was completed in 1914.

What was the state of American ocean-going vessels in the 1880's? Although the United States had earlier built up a navy, by the 1880s, there were very few U.S. ocean-going vessels. Of nearly sixteen-hundred vessels which touched at the port of Gibraltar in the last quarter of the year 1883, not one carried our flag, not one.

When was the Suez Canal completed? The completion of the Suez Canal in 1869, it dramatically increased the amount of trading in that part of the world. The same man that built the Suez Canal, is now going to build the Panama Canal. When it is completed, this will also have a dramatic impact on the amount of trading done in this region of the world.

Is the Illinois & Michigan Canal large enough? The Illinois & Michigan Canal, opened in 1848, is too small. A much larger canal needs to be built to replace it. Trade is restricted on the Mississippi River because ship wrecks are not removed. Building a much bigger canal, and proper management of the Mississippi River, would allow much more exporting of Illinois products, including coal, to other countries.

Distilling Stackpole's February 11, 1887 Blade Article

The Editor of the Ottawa Free Trader described Stackpole's writings as "discursive" on April 28, 1883. The dictionary description for the word "discursive" is:

Discursive: Digressing from subject to subject. Typical synonyms include: rambling, digressive, meandering, wandering, long, lengthy, wordy, verbose, long-winded.

The author, who has read almost all of Stackpole's writings during his lifetime, would heartily agree with using the word "discursive" to describe Stackpole's writings. The author would distill Stackpole's 5,873 word article down to just 158 words as shown below.

To allow more exporting of Illinois products, including coal, the waterways from Chicago to New Orleans need to be improved. The Illinois & Michigan Canal should be replaced with a much larger canal, making it easier to move goods from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River needs to be better managed including removal of wrecked ships, and more locks and dams.

Work has started on the Panama Canal. This improvement, coupled with a better Mississippi river transportation system, will allow Illinois coal to be shipped to Japan and China.

A Trans-Pacific Railroad from the Sea of Japan to the Caspian, should be built by Americans with American steel rails, under the auspices of China, Russia, Japan, and Korea;—the rails, etc., to be delivered on that distant shore by our Ocean and Lake vessels, by way of the canal soon to be opened at Darien [Panama], and using our improved Mississippi River transportation system.

Reference to 1860 Writings

In the February 11, 1887, Blade article, Stackpole said he wrote about this subject back in 1860 in the Bloomington and Peoria newspapers. At this time, the author can not find copies of these articles.

Penniless at Death

Stackpole ended up penniless at his death. He, his wife, and their only daughter are buried in unmarked graves in Fairbury's Graceland Cemetery. He apparently did not have enough money to buy grave markers.

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Indian Grove Township Graceland Cemetery

You may use this site to locate burial sites of family members or friends.
Search by Last Name, First Name or Cemetery/Section.

The three sections to the main Graceland Cemetery are:
Old, Old Cemetery "OOC," Old Cemetery "OC," or Morris Addition "MA"

South Graceland Cemetery has Sections A, B, and C.

Search Burial Records

Last Name

First Name

Cemetery

Section

Block

Interments

Last Name	M	First Name	Date of Death	Cemetery	Section & Block
Stackpole	Thomas	William	4/4/1896	Graceland	Old Cemetery, 16
Stackpole		Jennie	5/18/1910	Graceland	Old Cemetery, 16
Stackpole		Anna	8/18/1940	Graceland	Old Cemetery, 16

May 1887

In Alma Lewis James' Nicks from the Blade, she noted the following.

June 3, 1887 W.T. Stackpole last week issued his copyrighted paper upon the "Illinois Coal Field" accompanied with a review of Bloomington's advantages as a manufacturing city, as a supplement to the Bloomington Bulletin.

The author has been unable to find a copy of this paper written in the Bloomington Bulletin. It was published in the February 11, 1887, Blade, and it is transcribed above.

June 22, 1889 Letter to the Blade Editor

William T. Stackpole wrote a lengthy letter to the Blade editor. The author has read most of the writings of William T. Stackpole, and most of the times he uses a lot of flowery language. Unfortunately, it is sometimes difficult to tell what his real point was. In this case, the author believes Stackpole is advocating the lower second vein of coal in Fairbury be mined, once the upper level has been consumed.

The Rock of the "Illinois Country."

To the Editor of the Blade

Reference in your paper to the late Dr. Evans, of Streator, whom I had the honor to know personally, and of whose death I had not heard until I read of it in your paper, recalls to my mind matters that I regard as of great and endearing importance to Livingston county, and to this vicinity. Dr. Evans was a gentleman, not only of fortune and public spirit, but of much practical experience, and high scientific attainments, and geology, and especially the coal formation about Streator, and this portion of Illinois, was his specialty. He was pre-eminently the geologist of Streator, and, I think, of these two great counties. I communicated to him the substance of the letter in your paper about a year ago, and the views of J. T. Kirkwood, of Scranton, Kansas, (formerly of Fairbury) as to the lower vein, its quality, value; etc., and he endorsed the correctness of those views in substance.

Dr. Evans said in effect that while the lower vein in this county, and at Fairbury, was considerably thinner than the one we are working, yet it was of superior quality, and of greater specific gravity, hence yielding more tons to a given bulk; and to the miner and the public, he considered the lower vein much the most important and valuable vein of the two, and extended over the county as widely--say about 800-square miles. He was very emphatic and decided, and while I can not give his precise language, yet I have never heard more decided and stronger views expressed in favor of the practical value and importance of this almost untouched and vast mineral deposit in our county, and so think it proper to thus record it in your paper; not to promote new and perhaps hazardous mining ventures or speculation, but rather to encourage those already made, with Dr. Evans' views, as to the strength of this reserved line of natural resources, prepared by the Great Architect for the future of our town and county; and as a part of the great coal field of Illinois, which we hope can never be grasped by the hand of oppression or monopoly, as in Pennsylvania or England, and should be indeed "a factor in the destiny of nations;" and a physical rock of defense for the future of our country and the world. For, while none can deny the importance and value of the discoveries of natural gas and petroleum, and of the use of these, articles in many places as fuel, yet a fair examination of these great subjects shows that their flow, as a rule, cannot safely be depended on for a great period of time. Hence that vast duration which seems written upon the great Illinois coal field by the hand of God, is denied to them, as it is also denied to England's fuel supply.

The extensive use of cheap fuel gas, made from Illinois coal, which I referred to in my Bloomington paper in May, 1887, as among the probabilities of the near future, I found well established as accomplished facts in Streator, Ottawa, and LaSalle. Already our sister county of LaSalle has some of the most extensive and important manufacturing establishments of their kind in the western hemisphere. The Streator bottle works and the LaSalle zinc works, are the most extensive in America. Mr. Modes, the superintendent and manager of the first, formerly of Pittsburgh; and master of his profession, showed me through their works and explained their use of fuel gas, which they make from the screenings of the Streator coal mines, which costs them 40 cents a ton, and was positive that the Pittsburgh men could not equal them in the economy of

production of their wares. I learned also, from other sources, of instances, where, at Pittsburgh, the price of natural gas has been doubled to heavy manufacturers, one of whom was paying six hundred dollars per month, as against three hundred a short time before; still in some lines of glass manufacture the Ohio gas has depressed prices for a time.

I canvassed for and published nineteen thousand of my papers in La Salle county, that circulated in about a dozen daily and weekly papers in that county, which, in population, outranks any in Illinois except Cook, and, in some solid and useful enterprises and industries is unequalled. And in that great county which adjoins ours, was the first discovery of coal in the Americas--the great agent today of material power in the world, and from which Mr. Edison expects to produce electricity by a direct, cheap and simple process. And I gather from Judge Bruce's book the very interesting fact, that there, in LaSalle county, was the first settlement by white men, the settlement at Kaskaskia being a removal from about where Utica now stands. And while the French removed from near Utica, yet they never entirely abandoned the valley of the gentle Illinois, and it was not only the first settlement but it was also continuous. Hence it follows that it was here, in the valley of the gentle Illinois, that the first Christian worship of all the vast basin of the Mississippi occurred. Here the greater rock was first planted.

And of this region De Tocqueville in his work "Democracy in America," says: "The valley of the Mississippi is upon the whole, the most magnificent dwelling place prepared by God for man's abode."

Let us then wisely and reverently heed the signs of the times, and the lines of nature and of God's providence, that blend in this central portion of our country between the lakes and the gulf, which now should bear the same relation to the whole, as that once borne by Virginia and Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and New York.

Respectfully,

Wm. T. Stackpole

Fairbury, Illinois

June 11, 1889

Chapter 18

High-School Essay on Fairbury Coal Mining

Back in April of 1973, Fairbury-Cropsey High-School student Anna Teubel, wrote a short essay which was published in the Illinois History magazine:

Miners' Talk

By: Anna Teubel

Fairbury-Cropsey High School

One day recently my sister and I decided to climb an old shale pile one-half mile from our place in Fairbury, Illinois. Climbing up its jagged, irregular incline, I thought how this "hill" came to be.

In the year 1859 there was a demand for an abundant supply of cheap fuel. Henry L. Marsh, who owned a large tract of land near Fairbury, tested his land for coal and struck a vein. Thus began the coal-mining era in Fairbury.

Coal mining was a way of making money for Fairbury men from the 1860's to the 1900's. According to Alma Lewis-James in her book *Stuffed Clubs and Antimacassars* even Bat Masterson worked in the Fairbury mines for several years before becoming a United States marshal in Dodge City, Kansas.

Coal miners had a language all their own, and were quite proud of it. One of the expressions that they used which is in common usage today was the one used to designate coal before it was processed. Such coal has always been designated as "mine run," a term now used to indicate almost any product before it is processed.

The miner gave colorful names to his tools which seemed quite strange to the outsider. His shovel was a "banjo" and his mine car, used to haul coal, a "widow-maker." Frequently he "took five" (a nap), and he might be covered with "gob" or mine refuse.

Many boys dropped out of sixth grade to work in the mines. Sometimes the hard work resulted in early death. These boys were known as "mountain jacks" and ran errands and brought water to the miners.

Labor troubles caused mine strikes. This stopped coal production for a while. When the strikes were settled, miners' wages would be increased but so would the price of coal. Another problem was the mine tunnel that gradually sank, causing the railroad, a street, and the water tower to lean.

Despite strikes and cave-ins, the miners managed to have some fun in their work. They had mule teams (a "hillbilly" team and a "snake stomper" team). They worked to see which team could mine the most coal. One Fourth of July, they even held a small circus of their own. The hit of the show was a goat who pulled a mine car and who would shake hands with everyone. [From Alma Lewis-James, *Stuffed Clubs & Antimacassars*, pp. 4, 23, 24, 41; Fairbury Blade, Centennial Edition, April 3, 1958, sec. 2, p. 1, sec. 4, pp. 2,3]



These lead miners no doubt developed a body of slang different from but comparable to that of coal miners.

Illinois History Apr 1973

Chapter 19

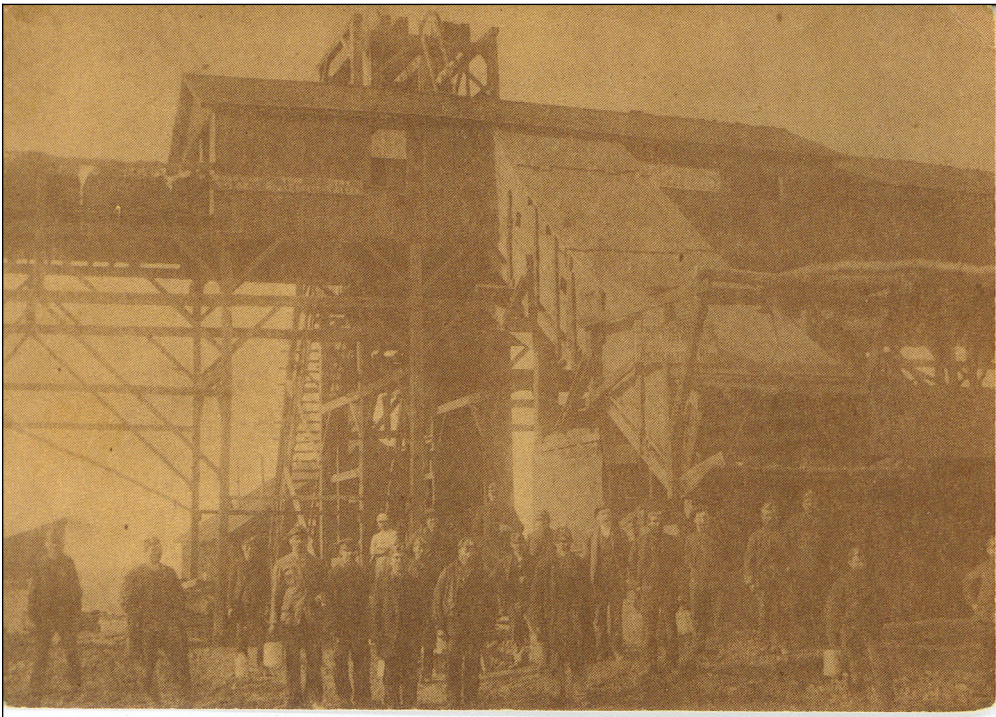
Bat Masterson Myth

The Myth


There is a very colorful story that the famous Dodge City lawman, Bat Masterson, worked in the Fairbury coal mines, before we moved to Dodge City, Kansas.

Undated Post Card

At some point, this myth got converted into a post card. Unfortunately, we don't know the date of this post card. This is the front of the post card:



This is the back of the postcard:

POST CARD	
CORRESPONDENCE	PLACE POSTAGE  STAMP HERE
<p>Coal mines were the heart of Fairbury's thriving economy. Three mines were big business and brought immense prosperity--plus problems.</p> <p>Rough miners which gave Fairbury the worst name in the country also caused all the stores and shops to stay open until 10 o'clock at night, and the saloons stayed open until that atrocious hour, too.</p> <p>Every night there were at least three or four rip roaring, bloody fights in which the battlers did their best to tear each other to bits. Men seized on every possible pretext for argument, and every fight piled fresh fuel on the hatred between the rival sections of the town. Not one person was untouched.</p> <p>Bat Masterson, (center rear of photo) an early miner, left after several years to become sheriff of Dodge City, Kansas. He was well-known because of his quiet manner and gentlemanly ways. These were rare in Fairbury. Eventually, the mines slowed and the feuds were patched and the town returned to normal.</p>	NAME AND ADDRESS
PEOPLE MAKE IT HAPPEN	

The first newspaper account of this myth occurred in the March 27, 1952 Blade:

Roots of Fairbury Buried Deeply in Coal Mines

Between 1860 and 1870 the population of Fairbury grew from an inconspicuous figure of 269 to within a few hundred of its present total. The reason for such rapid development was, of course, the opening of the coal mines.

Beneath the heaps of multi-colored earth which may be seen on the west, east and south edges of this city, therefore, lay one of the chief reasons why Fairbury is what it is today. Literally, the roots of the city in which we live are buried deep in the ground—200 feet down in the dark, empty mining tunnels which to this day form a honey-comb directly below us.

The mines form an enchanting chapter in the history of Fairbury. Many can still recall the later phases of the mining industry here for not too many years have passed since the last cage came up from the bottom. Many others can relate stories as told to them by relatives engaged in the earlier workings of the mines.

But there are many more who do not know, or have forgotten, the story of Fairbury's mines. This, then, is a brief sketch of a town that has ceased to exist; a hurried summary of the coming and the passing of an industry; a passing glimpse of the mining town of Fairbury—as told to this writer by one who was there when much of it took place, R. A. McAllister, and with much aid from a Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Livingston County, edited by Christopher C. Strawn, Fordyce B. Johnson and George H. Franzen, published in 1909.

The Beginning.

It was the year 1857 when John Atkins, Salmon G. Cone and Caleb L. Patton made a proposition to the stockholders of the eastern extension of the Peoria and Oquawka railroad (now T. P. & W.) for the location of a town site. Mr. Patton agreed to give Octave Chanute, one of the civil engineers of the road, one-half of the town lots provided he would locate the village on the Patton farm.

On November 10, 1857, Mr. Chanute laid out 24 blocks from portions of Sections 3 and 10 of Indian Grove township. For a brief time the village was known as South Avoca, but Mr. Patton about a year later gave it the name it now bears.

About two years later, in 1860, the first census in Fairbury was taken. It disclosed a population of 269. The following fall Henry L. Marsh sank the first coal mine and Fairbury had sent down its roots.

First in Central Illinois.

The Marsh shaft, located just a mile west of the present city limits, was the first to go down between Braidwood and Alton. Two previous attempts had failed because of too much water, but on August 22, 1861, success was met with. Coal was reached January 14, 1863, measuring four feet, ten inches in thickness. An independent village, or at least what passed for one, sprang up about the shaft, and was quickly named Marsh Town. The mine flourished, and because of it, men from as far away as east of the Alleghenies were drawn to the mine.

One such man made the Marsh mine a stepping stone on his way to becoming one of the west's most storied characters. He was a tall, rather slenderish fellow, with a determined face and a twinkish but steady eye. According to a miner's description later told to Mr. McAllister, the man soon became known as one who didn't look for trouble, but also as one who never bothered looking around for a way to edge around it once it started.

After a few years at the Marsh mine, the Easterner moved on farther west to Dodge City, Kansas. Dodge City was then known as the beginning of the untamed west, and the end of law and order. Decent townspeople came to like the quiet determination of the ex-miner from Illinois. They thought he might be able to tame Dodge City. In due time he was named United States Marshall, and he did bring law back to Dodge City. His name was Bat Masterson.

Interesting By-Products.

Fairbury got its second mine in April, 1867, when coal was found at a depth of 160 feet just east of the village. This mine produced an interesting by-product—sandstone, of which considerable quantity was removed. Some of this stone was used in the construction of the front of a building being constructed in Fairbury. Known as the Faulkner building, it stood where the Fairbury Paint Store now is. A number of the headstones still standing in Graceland cemetery are made of the sandstone removed from the mine.

An oily substance was also discovered in the east mine shaft and was found to be of use in the mixing of artists' paints.

The Walton Mine.

The beginning of the Walton mine in Fairbury was started in March, 1878, when James Gibbs, Robert Knight, Michael Hotchkiss and John Kirkwood purchased at trustee's sale for \$1,000 7 acres of the Marsh land, which was then just west of the village but which now stands at Calhoun street. This Streater firm struck coal at a depth of 176 feet after

a cost of nearly \$10,000. Three years later the mine was sold for that amount to Walton Brothers, the name by which the mine is known today. An Englishman, Robert Roberts, was the engineer at the time the shaft was sunk.

The Walton mine produced about 25,000 tons of coal per year for most of the 22 years it operated. The mine was abandoned in the early 1900's during which time two other mines were opened.

The original Marsh mine had closed in the late 1870's, and another mine had been opened on a quarter-mile farther west. Another mine had been opened on the Cook land south of town in 1885, coal being struck at a depth of 165 feet on New Year's day, 1886. Peak production of this mine was estimated at 18,000 tons per year.

New—Or None At All.

While Fairbury's five mines were alternately opening and in production up until 1921, the town was behaving quite like the frontier mining towns in dime novels. The East and West sides of town continually antagonized each other, fires were common and this coupled with the wish of each to secure the railroad station kept the village either with a brand new station or none at all.

The miners were a sturdy lot, and for all anyone ever knew about it, there may still be a car load of whisky barrels buried somewhere in the vicinity of the Marsh mine. This was said to have been stolen on a particularly dark evening, and buried for future reference by the thieves. It was, legend says, never found.

The village even had growing pains with the Peoria and Oquawka railroad. Because of the financially straitened condition of the road and their inability to pay their obligations, a bitter enmity arose between the road and town. Every occasion was sought to annoy each other.

"Blank Town of Fairbury."

One round, a particularly costly one, was won by the railroad one dry, windy day, when a train passed through the village at full speed, with "fires and steam at an unusually high state emitting great blazing cinders." Before many minutes had passed, the town was on fire. When the train arrived at Forrest, the engineer was said to have turned around, saw the black smoke, and remarked that he had "set the town of Fairbury on fire" as he came through.

This article says a lot of the content came from an interview with Mr. R. A. McAllister. Because the Bat Masterson story is not in either the 1878 or 1909 history books, it must have come from Mr. McAllister.

the mines.
But there are many more who do not know, or have forgotten, the story of Fairbury's mines. This, then, is a brief sketch of a town that has ceased to exist; a hurried summary of the coming and the passing of an industry; a passing glimpse of the mining town of Fairbury—as told to this writer by one who was there when much of it took place, R. A. McAllister, and with much aid from a Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Livingston County, edited by Christopher C. Strawn, Fordyce B. Johnson and George H. Franzen, published in 1909.

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From the story above, McAllister never saw Bat Masterson. He was described to McAllister by a coal miner.

From McAllister's obituary above, he was born in 1879. In the 7th grade, or age 12, he started to work in the coal mines. He would have started working in the coal mines in 1891. The Marsh mines were closed by 1880, which is where Bat Masterson supposedly worked.

The other interesting part of the story is the lost whiskey barrels.

or none at all.
The miners were a sturdy lot, and for all anyone ever knew about it, there may still be a car load of whisky barrels buried somewhere in the vicinity of the Marsh mine. This was said to have been stolen on a particularly dark evening, and buried for future reference by the thieves. It was, legend says, never found.
The village even had growing

Mr. McAllister was a very colorful character himself. Here is his January 12, 1967, obituary from the Blade:

Rites Today For 'Big Dick' McAllister, Ex-Gridder, Postmaster, Dies at 87

Richard A. 'Big Dick' McAllister, 87, long a colorful and sometimes controversial figure in Fairbury history, will be buried today with a funeral mass from St. John's Catholic Church in Fairbury, Rev. William Boucher will officiate at the 10 a.m. service, and interment will be made in St. John's cemetery.

McAllister, a former Fairbury postmaster, for 17 years until retirement in 1950, died Monday, Jan 9, at the Livingston County Nursing home where he was a patient nine months. His body was taken to the Cook Funeral home where visitation began on Wednesday.

He was born in Scotland November 20, 1879, a son of John and Catherine (McRoyal) McAllister. He married Anna Salmon in Fairbury June 30, 1905. She died in 1949. A brother also preceded him in death. He is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Agnes Richmond of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Mrs. Jane Tolbert, Peoria.

McAllister's formal education was modest, and after completing the seventh grade, he began work in the local coal mines. He was to continue as a student, self-taught in sports, politics, and union activities for most of his life.

McAllister served for years as secretary of the United Mine Workers local in Fairbury. He became an expert in parliamentary procedure, and insisted on following those rules at all meetings he attended, often to the chagrin of others.

For 50 years, he was a Democratic precinct committeeman in Fairbury, and in 1932 was an unsuccessful candidate for the State Senate against Simon Lantz. He also had lengthy service as a Fairbury alderman, and served many years as chairman of the streets and alley committee, a post in which he took particular pride.

But it was as a football player, 60 or more years ago, that he was perhaps best known. In that time, he was a leader in creating the reputation that Fairbury enjoyed for decades as an athletic capital.

McAllister's football for pay travels, although for sums paltry by comparison with today's professional gridgers, took him to Peru, Chicago, and Peoria for weekend games, and he was regarded as one of the leading tackles of his day in the state.

McAllister's determination to do things in the manner he deemed right and proper often brought him into conflict and controversy, but even his foes respected him as a man of integrity, who never hesitated to state his position in any manner.

He was a member of St. John's church and a secretary of the St. John's Cemetery Association. He belonged to the St. John's Men club and the Altar and Rosary Society.

Rites Today For 'Big Dick'

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August 23, 1962 Blade Story

This Blade article talked about the Bat Masterson myth:

IS IT LEGEND?

Rumor Reports That Bat Masterson Once Worked In Marsh Coal Mines

With all the westerns on television, and no end in sight, ever know that Bat Masterson was once a resident of Fairbury?

Several of the old timers remember people talking about his being here, but as R. A. McAlister reports, "I never actually saw him, but the word is that he worked at the Marsh Mines west of town."

As near as the Blade can determine, Masterson was in Fairbury a couple of years around the turn of the century.

Recent literature at Dominy Library reports that Masterson was in truth a poor shot and kill in that he rarely fired his six-gun in anger. In consequence, he walked at most four men throughout his career, not counting Indians.

Indeed, Masterson differed from his Wild West hero Hugh O'Brian ed warily, carrying a big bluff. In his time, the Wild West killer and outlaw was dying out, to be replaced by the confidence man.

Confidence men rarely kill; they are too artful. Bat Masterson was, among other things, an eager student of the technique of early confidence games.

Reports are that from 1872 to 1876 Masterson was preparing himself to be a peace officer. He

stole forty ponies from some Indians and sold them for \$1,200, he killed other Indians both as a free-lance buffalo hunter and as an army scout, and he got into a brawl with an army sergeant at Sweetwater, Texas, over a dance-hall girl.

The girl was killed while trying to shield Masterson; Bat was wounded, but he killed the soldier.

So the story goes, Bat left Dodge City in July, 1876, to follow the gold rush to Deadwood, but he got no further than Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he did so well as a faro banker that he stuck. Faro is a gambling game in which the players bet on the cards to be turned up from the top of the dealer's pack.

Masterson, like every professional gambler, needed a star. The badge of office permitted its wearer to carry a gun, which in turn provided just the psychological advantage necessary in a game of chance played for high stakes.

This was at a time when only peace officers were permitted to carry guns in Dodge City; all others were obliged to check their weapons in racks provided for the purpose.

Bat decided to run for sheriff

of Ford County.

His electioneering technique was simplicity itself: he bought an interest in the Lone Star Dance Hall. Only thus could a candidate convince the bizarre electorate of Dodge City that he was a sound citizen and a responsible taxpayer.

In November, 1877, Bat was elected by a three-vote margin. He took office in January, and what is more, he started off in high gear by catching some would-be train robbers.

Bat as the months wore on, he whiled away his evening hours as a professional gambler along with cronies like Doc Holliday, an alcoholic ex-dentist, and Luke Short, a dandiprat.

The Kansas State Historical Society, and an authority on the dossier of Masterson, has established that, according to the census of 1880, Bat Masterson was living with Annie Lachar, nineteen, described as his "concubine."

As a noted historian has said, "Maybe that was the way some of the officers in those days kept watch over juvenile delinquents. They just lived with them."

Masterson jumped to Tombstone, back to Dodge City, then to Trinidad, and on to Denver. Here the trail led down from glory. In the 1890's Masterson ran a furo layout at the Arcade in Denver, then notoriously the crookedest town in the country.

Bat around the turn of the century Bat was ordered to leave even Denver. This was like being

told that he was too low for the sewer.

In 1902, he went to New York, perhaps stopping off in Fairbury on the way.

In New York he was arrested for illegally carrying a gun. However, his friends pulled on strings that led all the way to the White House; and such was the magic of the Wild West legend that President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Masterson a deputy U.S. marshal for the southern district of New York.

The term of appointment was brief.

Then Bat was put out to pasture as a sports writer for the "Morning Telegraph."

He died at his desk in 1921.

By 1962, the story had changed from Bat Masterson working in the Fairbury coal mines before he went to Kansas. Now the story was that Bat worked in the Fairbury coal mines at age 47 in the year 1900.

Alma Lewis James's Book Published in 1968

The first edition of her book was published in 1968. The next version was published in 1977. She chose to continue the myth of Bat Masterson working in the Fairbury coal mines per her 1977 edition of the book *Stuffed Clubs and Antimacassars*.

It was the next year, 1859, when John Marsh bought eighty acres of land adjoining Patton's on the west, and had it surveyed for an addition to the town. He then caused much excitement by going against mining tradition to bore for coal in the open prairie, but he did discover a substantial vein of good quality. Bat Masterson worked for Marsh in this mine for several years before he went on to Dodge City and became a famous United States Marshal. He was remembered because, unlike the other miners, he was always well dressed and quiet mannered.

The mines brought real prosperity, for it gave the settlers a cheap fuel and supplied the railroad as well. Heretofore, their engines had burned wood cut from the forests, but the supply was fast vanishing.

We are very thankful that Alma Lewis James did all the work required to publish this book on Fairbury history. Unfortunately, she uses hardly any references in her book with respect to where she got her information. She does give us a warning that not all the stories in her book are necessarily true:

Foreword

This is the account of the founding of Fairbury, a little town of Livingston County, Central Illinois.

The tales are not intended as solemn history but for pleasure, and to show that, if parents are people, so are grand-parents, and their fathers and mothers before them. They hustled for a living, paid their taxes, worried about their children, had their fun and their troubles. They were real.

The story begins with one man's project for his farm just before the Civil War; and it ends with the century, when electricity and the automobile changed the pattern of family life.

I leave my story there. Anyone desiring to ascertain what man was candidate for a political office, or how many tons of coal were mined during a given year, is respectfully referred to any of the three histories of Livingston County.

The three histories she is referring to are the 1878, 1888, and 1909 Livingston County History Books.

Note that she switched the story back to Bat Masterson working in the Fairbury coal mines before he went to Kansas.

September 11, 1986 Blade Story

Jim Roberts, editor and publisher of the blade, wrote this opinion piece on the myth of Bat Masterson:

September 11, 1986 Blade

Standing on the corner . . .

Just Whittlin'

with The Blade

By Jim Roberts



When the phone rang the other evening, it was ex-Blade publisher Don Kramer, calling from Casa Grande, Ariz.

Don had just finished reading this column of a couple weeks ago which took note of the one thing which wasn't cited in the long string of accomplishments which were part of the obituary that week of Dr. Lee Garber, 92, the nationally noted educator and author who had graduated from high school here 70 years ago, and who lived here for a couple of decades after his retirement.

Lee for many years during that retirement tried in vain to put flesh on the bones of a legend that "Bat" Masterson, who gained fame, or notoriety, or whatever, as a western gunfighter, had, early in his career, worked at one of the several Fairbury coal mines before the turn of the century.

Kramer's call was to relate that the late Richard "Big Dick" McAllister, used to reminisce about Masterson, who he said was a guard at one of the mines here.

McAllister, a full-blooded Irishman born in Scotland, was a giant of a man when most men were 5'10" or so, long before the era of the behemoths who play football and basketball today in the college and pro ranks. McAllister played football too, in an era when it wasn't much of a school sport but more of a town sport, and in the pictures we've seen, he was a head taller, at least, than any of his teammates.

McAllister was also a coal miner, at a time when mining was by and large a sledge-hammer and dynamite job; dirty and dangerous. And no doubt McAllister's size

had something to do with his being elected an official of the miner's union.

Kramer came to Fairbury in 1948, and television was then in-diapers. Two or three years later one of the networks launched a weekly serial allegedly based on the exploits of Masterson in the gory days of the Western frontier mining camps and cow-towns. An actor named Gene Barry played the title role, complete with top hat and gold-headed cane, Don recalled.

"And Dick would get really indignant, said he (Masterson) wasn't that kind of a guy at all, a common fellow, an everyday type of person."

"Dick would get really worked up that tv would poriray Masterson as a dandy."

* * *

As related by Kramer, Masterson, a native of Princeton, was in Fairbury only a relatively short time, a memory which "Buck" Morris corroborates, based on his talks several years ago with the late Fairbury rural mail carrier, Frank Masterson, who was a relative but whose comments "Buck" has, for the most part, forgotten.

* * *

McAllister himself, while not as famous as "Bat" Masterson, was a colorful and sometimes controversial figure in Fairbury history and widely known in Illinois political and union circles as well as to football fans across the state.

He died on Jan. 9, 1967, 17 years after he retired as Fairbury's Postmaster, an office he also held for a like number of years following his unsuccessful race for the Illinois Senate on the Democrat ticket in 1932.

After he was brought to Fairbury by his

immigrant parents, McAllister's formal education was modest, and after completing the seventh grade, he began work in the Fairbury coal mines. He was to continue as a student, self-taught in sports, politics and union activities for most of his life.

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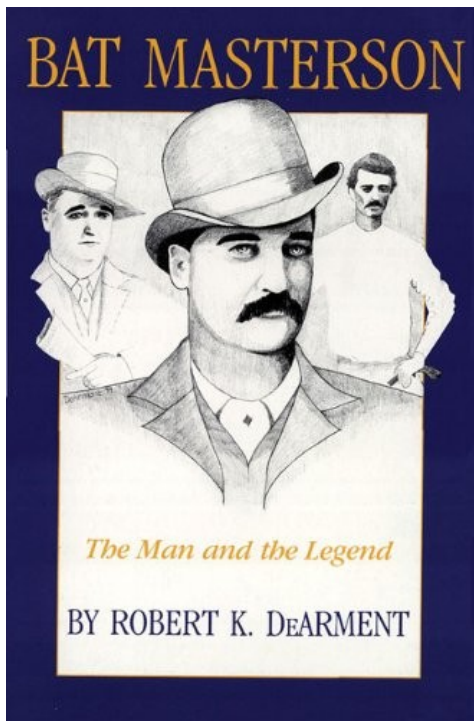
Today's Postmaster, John Reis, aided us in quickly finding McAllister's obituary in our files. It closed with the observation that "McAllister's determination to do things in the manner he deemed right and proper often brought him into conflict and controversy, but even his foes respected him as a man of integrity, who never hesitated to state his position in any matter."

It is interesting that Dr. Lee Garber was apparently unable to find any substantial proof that Bat Masterson worked at the Fairbury coal mines.

Thorough Biography

Bat Masterson was a very colorful character, becoming Marshal of Dodge City, Kansas. The newspapers built up his character and related stories because he was popular with readers back East. It is well known that the newspapers were very inaccurate with respect to these type of characters.

One of the most thorough biographies about Bat Masterson was written by Robert Dearment in 1989 and titled **Bat Masterson: The Man and the Legend**. It is available on Amazon at <http://tinyurl.com/hgj233v>.

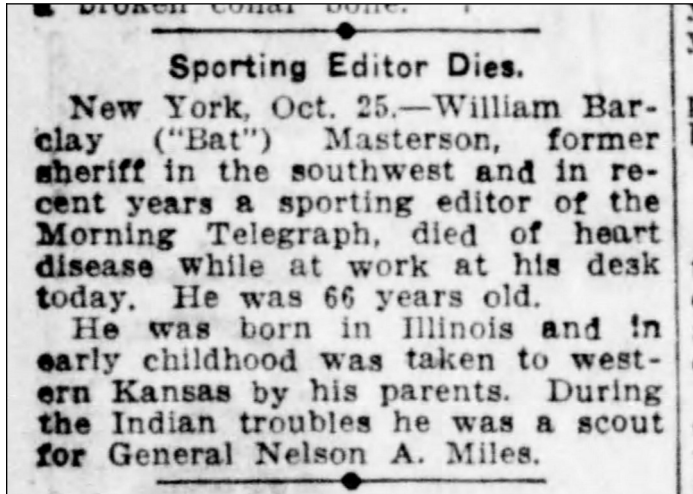


Mr. Dearment painstakingly researched all the aspects of Bat Masterson's life. He started by finding his birth records in a church in Canada. He found that Bat's father moved the whole family from Canada to Kansas in 1871 when Bat was just 16 years old. Bat started his career as a lawman in his early 20s.

Around 1900, when Bat was 47 years old, he moved from Denver to Chicago. By that time, Bat had become a major promoter of heavyweight boxing matches. He promoted the matches, and attended them in America's large cities. In 1902, he traveled from Chicago to New York City. He was planning on traveling on to England to promote heavyweight boxing. He never made the trip to England, but he ended up with a sports reporting job at a New York City newspaper. He continued to work as a reporter until his death in 1921.

Typical Inaccurate Newspaper Reporting

As an example of how inaccurate the newspapers were about Bat Masterson, the October 16, 1921, Pantagraph ran a story about his death.



This obituary said Bat was born in Illinois. The author, Mr. Dearment, verified he was born in Canada.

Bat Too Young to Have Worked at Fairbury before Kansas

Bat moved to from Canada to Kansas when he was 16 years old in 1871. The biography author, Mr. Dearment, found no evidence he worked at Fairbury when he was 16 years old. The post card picture is of a man much older than 16 years old.

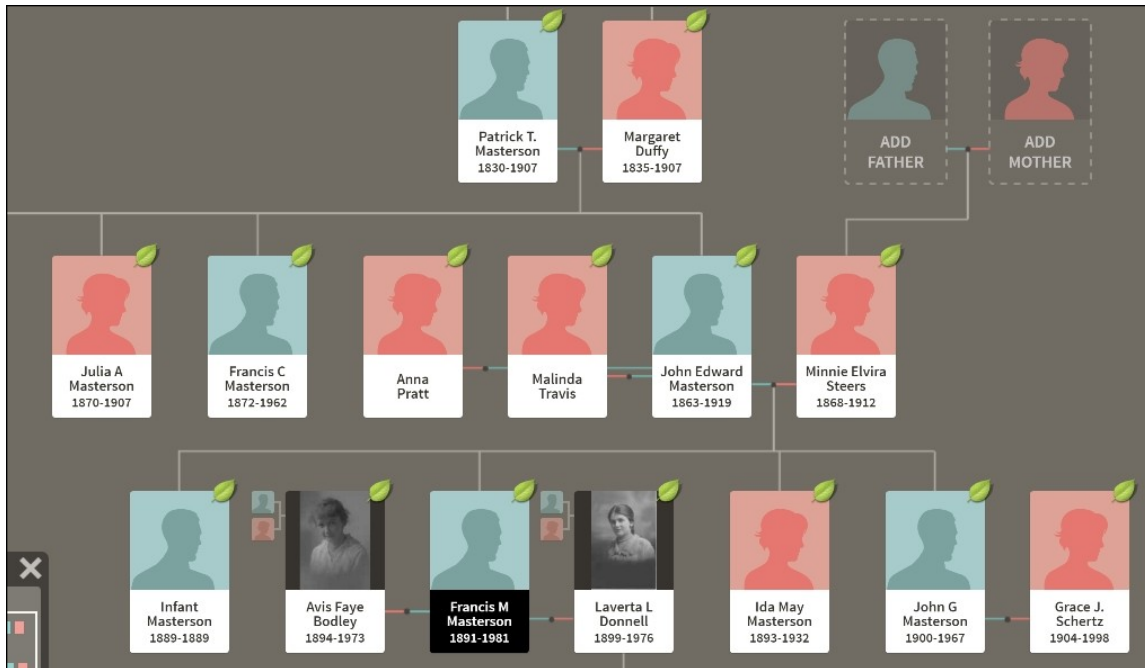
Bat Too Famous by 1900 to Work in a Fairbury Coal Mine

By 1900, the newspapers had built Bat up into a national hero of the Wild West. By that time, he was a nationally known promoter of heavyweight boxing events. Bat was famous enough that he had no financial reason to have to work for the relatively low wages of a coal mine worker. In 1902, he landed a sports reporting job at a very large New York City newspaper.

No Evidence to Support that Bat Was Related to Postmaster Frank Masterson

Frank Masterson married the sister of the author's Grandmother, Frances Ann Bodley-Maley. Frank's wife was named Avis Faye Bodley. He was a Postmaster in Fairbury.

The author has researched Frank Masterson's family tree back to Ireland.



Bat Masterson's father was born in Canada. No connection could be found between the Fairbury Mastersons and Bat Masterson. If there is a connection, it would have to be many generations ago in Ireland. It is virtually impossible to perform genealogy searches in Ireland. Their census records were destroyed by fire, and some were converted into paper pulp for the World War I effort.

It appears highly unlikely that Bat Masterson ever worked in a Fairbury coal mine. It appears the myth got started back on March 27, 1952, when a coal miner told a story to Mr. McAllister, then the story was printed by an unknown Blade reporter. This story has been repeated many times in post cards, newspapers, and a book since its origination.

Chapter 20

TP&W Coal and Water Refueling Station

The TP&W used coal fired steam locomotives until they bought their first diesel locomotive in 1947. The coal and water refueling station was located on the east end of Fairbury. The photo below came from the April 18, 1974 Blade.



The Echoes Museum has an aerial photograph of the Jim Sutter farm, just east of Fairbury and south of Route 24. The upper portion of this aerial photograph shows the location of this fueling station.



The caption in the museum that goes with this aerial photo is shown below.

T. P. & W. COAL STORAGE AND WATER TANK

Approximately 1/4 mile east of Fairbury along T. P. & W. railroad

Pre 1945 - Looking to the Northwest

Steam engines on the railroad would stop here to refill with coal and water. Indian Creek, a short distance to the east, was dammed to create a pool where the railroad bridge crosses the creek. Water was pumped up to the water tower.

The chimney of the old high school can be seen above the trees in the upper left corner and the farm buildings above the coal storage are on North Seventh Street where the walking trail from the west meets Seventh Street slightly north of the First Baptist Church.

The East -West road north of the coal storage is East Locust Street which turns south outside of the right side of the picture and comes back into the picture to meet Route 24.

The East - West road south of the storage and north of the farm buildings is Route 24.

The old aerial photo was used to approximately locate the coal and water refueling station on a 2016 Google Map of Fairbury.

Chapter 21

Fairbury Coal Miners and the KKK

The May 17, 1924, Belleville News Democrat published the following story.

Belleville News Democrat

Illinois Miners Adopt Anti-Klan Resolutions

Any Member of Organization Attending Ku Klux Meeting Liable to Expulsion.

Peoria, Ill., May 17. — Eight hundred coal miners, all delegates to the Illinois miners' state Convention, in session in this city went on record this week as opposing the Kluxers.

On the convention floor, twenty-five resolutions, coming from as many different locals throughout the state, all bitterly condemning the Ku Klux Klan, were introduced and favorably acted upon.

Edward Carlson, president, and R.A. McAllister, Secretary of the Fairbury local union, were among the most strenuous opponents the Klan ever faced on a convention floor, which by their hypocrisy and secrecy they managed to gain access to. The resolution adopted and introduced by the Fairbury local covered every phase which could be thought of and makes membership in the Kluxers' organization an impossibility for any miner.

Adopts Resolution

The Fairbury resolution which meets with the approval of organized labor in general reads:

During the last few years the Ku Klux Klan, a secret organization which promotes discord among our people and strife within the ranks of organized labor, seeks to destroy the American principles of religious freedom and tolerance and purposely fosters radical prejudice.

The K.K.K. is destructive to that freedom and devotion to the principles of liberty which we regard as the first essential in republican form of government. The Klan seeks also to take into its own hands the administration of punishment, thus setting itself up as superior to government in the enforcement of law.

We know of nothing that could be more tolerable or more hostile to the purposes of organized government or the trade union movement.

Issues Not New

The issues involved are not new. They are as old as the institution of organized government. The trade union movement of America, long since cognizant of the importance of these issues to labor and in the convention of 1893, unanimously adopted the following resolutions, setting forth the principles which cannot at any time be discarded or renounced without the destruction of essential liberties.

Resolved, we deplore the introduction of any sectarian or captious side issues among, the working people. Such movements are destined to divide labor forces and produce bitter antagonisms as they produce religious bigotry, provoke rancorous intolerance and divert the working people from working out their own emancipation.

Resolved. that we here and now reaffirm as one of the cardinal principles of the labor movement, that the working people must unite and organize irrespective of creed. color, sex, nationality or Politics.

We believe that no member of our union can consistently participate in the activities of the K. K. K., or any similar organization and we un-hesitantly denounce its efforts to supplant organized government, to promote religious intolerance, racial antagonism, and bigotry and,

Amends Constitution

Whereas, that our constitution be amended to read that any member knowingly attending a K. K. K. meeting, distributing or selling K. K. K. literature, newspaper, or such, shall be expelled from the organization.

Another resolution introduced from Williamson County by delegates Joe Dumount, Matt Francian, Thelix Robusa, John Marnco and Henry Ulrick, reads:

Resolved, that any member found guilty of aiding or abetting in any way, by word of mouth, or by statements of the K. K. K. shall be suspended from membership of the miner's union for a period of 10 years.

The convention delegates adopted the condemnatory resolutions and hence forth any member of the miner's union who is a member of the K. K. K. or who in any manner gives aid or assistance or even associates with a shame-faced rodent known as a Klansman, shall be automatically ousted from the ranks of the miners' union.

Chapter 22

Last Coal Mine Closes in 1941

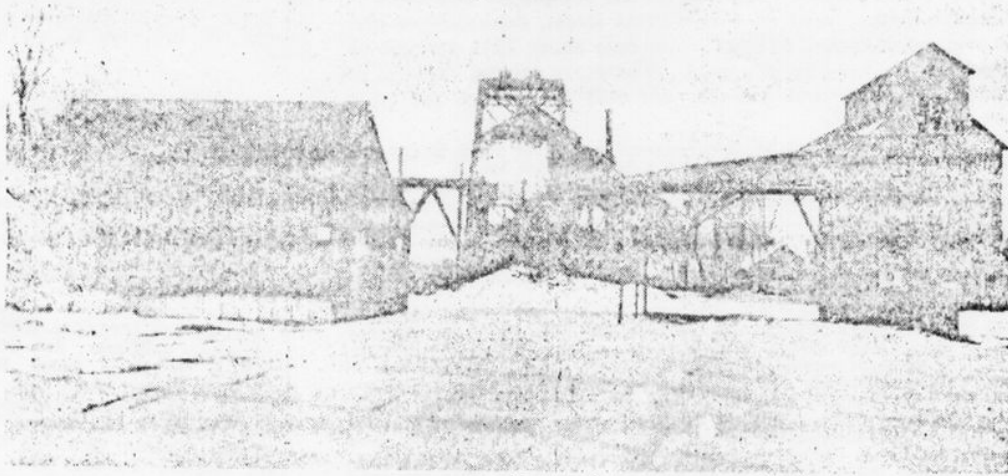
The Blade, Friday, June 13, 1941

Births: Mr. and Mrs. Hebert Weeks, Philadelphia, Pa., June 8, boy; Dr. and Mrs. Raymond Householder, Chicago, May 31, boy; Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Schneider, Weston, June 6, boy; Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Brown, Forrest, June 8, twin girls; Mr. and Mrs. Ramon Carter, June 9, boy; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Reed, Piper City, June 12, boy.

Weddings: Ethel Ness, San Francisco, Calif. and Cpl. Ralph Ely were wed June 5; Grace Schertz and John Masterson were wed Saturday; Mary Ann Hofferbert and Charles Cox were wed.

After an existence of 56 years the coal mine just south of town, known originally as the Cooperative Coal Company and, in more recent years as the Indian Creek Coal Company, has ceased to operate. The coal company in reality has not been in active operation since April 1. At a meeting of the directors Tuesday afternoon they decided to close the business.

Old Fairbury Institution Being Dismantled



The work of dismantling the tipple and other buildings at the Indian Creek Coal company mine just south of town, better known as the Co-operative Coal company, has started, and what remains of one of Fairbury's oldest institutions will within the next few months be no more.

The mine had not been in operation since April 1, 1941, but it was not until June tenth last that the directors met and decided to close the business.

Thousands and thousands of tons of coal have been taken from the mine since it was first put in operation 57 years ago.

Twenty-five men organized the Co-

operative Coal company in the summer of 1885, but active work on the sinking of the shaft itself did not start until October of that year. Among the original members of the Co-operative Coal company were the following: John Monroe, Pete Monroe, Robert Roberts, John Finnegan, John Hetherington, David Price, R. J. McAllister, John McAllister, James Loughran, William Williams, Evan Williams, James Dailey, John Dailey, Joe McCurdy, Joe Wright. All the original members have passed away, the last to go being R. J. McAllister, who died in this city March 5 last.

The following excerpts taken from The Blade of January, 1886, tell of

the striking of coal when the mine was sunk:

January 1, 1886. — The miners at the new shaft struck coal on Wednesday night at about eleven o'clock. The vein is said to be about five feet four inches in thickness and of good quality, and at a depth of 170 feet. As a consequence the men are feeling very jubilant, and during the night they celebrated by firing guns and otherwise expressing their great satisfaction.

January 24, 1886.—The new shaft has its hoisting engine in operation and this week commenced taking out coal.

The February 8, 1924 Fairbury Blade published the obituary of John Hetherington, one of the original members of the Co-operative Coal Mine.

JOHN HETHERINGTON

John Hetherington, who for almost a half century, had been a resident of this city, passed away at his home at 519 South Sixth street early Wednesday morning. Although able to be up and around most of the time, Mr. Hetherington had not been in the best of health for several years past, being afflicted with asthma and heart trouble. He was aged 63 years, 11 months, and 11 days.

Mr. Hetherington was born in Schuylkill county, Pennsylvania, February 25, 1860, and there spent his boyhood days. He came here in 1876 and had since made Fairbury his home. Thirty-nine years ago last November, he was united in marriage to Miss Etta Keyes, and to them were born five children, three of whom, together with the widow survive and are: Walter, of this city; Mrs. Thomas Williams of Indiana Harbor, Ind., and Mrs. Nellie Belle Harrison, of Chicago.

Three grandchildren and the following brothers and sisters also survive: Mrs. Anna Eames, Mrs. Jane Hornsby, Mrs. Hugh Easton and Edward and Will Hetherington, all of this city, and Jonathan of Coran, Cal.

Mr. Hetherington was one of the charter members of the Co-operative Coal company, whose shaft is located just south of this city, and helped to sink the shaft there 38 years ago. Although he has been unable to follow his occupation, that of a miner, for the past six years, he still held his interest in the organization. Mr. Hetherington was a good father and husband, neighbor, and friend and during his long residence here made a host of friends.

The funeral services will be held this afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from the family home. Rev. J.E. Howard officiating. Interment will be in Graceland cemetery.

Chapter 23

Remnants of Fairbury Coal Mining

Coal mining played a major role in Fairbury from about 1862 until the last mine closed in 1941.....or roughly 80 years. As of 2016, there has been no operating coal mine in Fairbury since 1941.....or 75 years.

It is interesting to review what is left in 2016 from the coal mining days.

Slag Piles

The only slag piles left are the entrance to the Timber Ridge subdivision, and the small brush covered slag mile a few blocks east of the grain elevator between 9th and 10th streets.

Marsh Park

John Marsh donated the land for Marsh park. This park is still in use today.



John Marsh Home

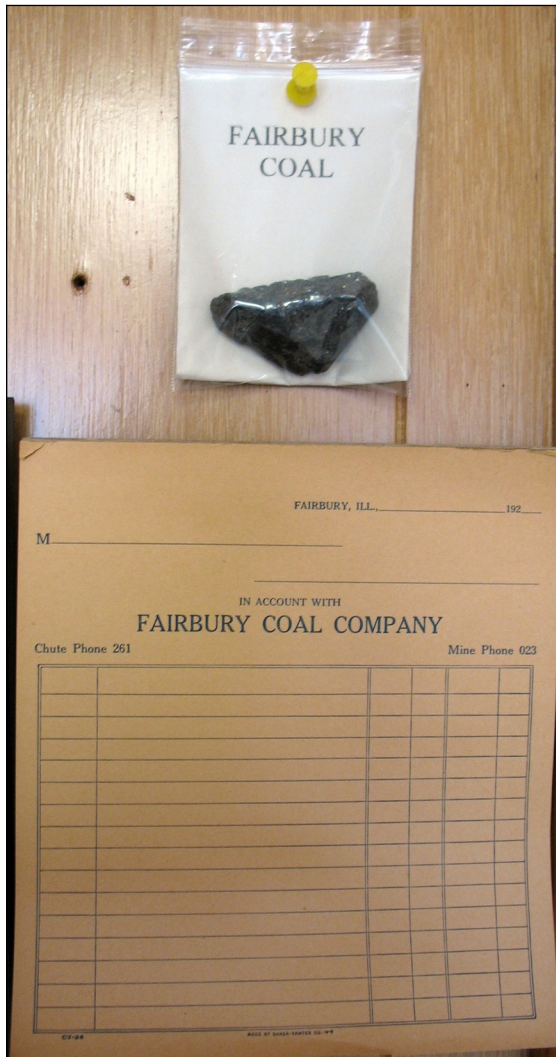
The house that John Marsh built just west of the park still exists today. The street address is 200 North Jackson Street, Fairbury.



Coal Mining Tools

The Echoes Museum has a coal miner's lamp on display. It also has a small lump of Fairbury coal on display.





Coal Production and Sales Ledgers

Diane Pawlowski, Echoes Museum Board Member, has several Fairbury coal mining ledgers with miner's names, their daily production, their daily pay, and the names of customers.

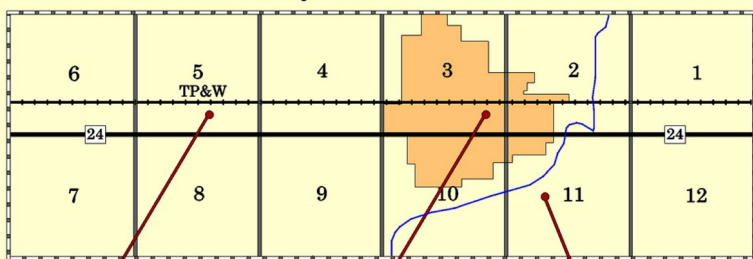
Other Coal Mining Artifacts

There are probably other pictures and coal mining artifacts in existence that have been passed down to succeeding generations from the Fairbury coal miners. If you have any of these artifacts, please consider loaning or donating them to the Echoes Museum in Fairbury.

Historic Murals

In June of 2016, historic murals were erected in Central Park on Main Street. One of these murals documents the importance of coal mining to Fairbury's history.

Coal Mining



Fairbury Coal Company
26N-6E-5
1904 - 1925

Walton's Bros. Coal Mine
26N-6E-3
1881 - 1904

Indian Creek Coal Company
26N-6E-11
1886 - 1941



**We Appreciate Your
Custom and Our Service
Will Satisfy You**

Lump\$5.50 First Nut.....\$5.00
Mine Run.....4.50 Second Nut....4.00
Slack \$2.00

**Co-operative Coal
Company**



Coal Mining

John Marsh moved from New York to Fairbury. He brought with him a knowledge of coal formations. In 1863, he and his son Henry dug a shaft and found a coal vein at 180 feet of depth. This was the first coal mine in Livingston County. This discovery of coal prompted many more coal mines in Livingston County. Fairbury eventually had three known coal mines, as shown on the mural. The first mine was west of Fairbury and closed in 1925. The second mine was at the west end of Fairbury and it closed in 1904. The third mine was near Indian Creek Golf Course and it operated until 1941.

The coal mines created many new jobs. These jobs attracted workers from all over the United States. Many immigrants also moved from Europe to work in the Fairbury coal mines. In 1907, the total output of Livingston County coal mines was 269,811 tons. The TP&W railroad was used to move Fairbury coal to market. A 1923 advertisement for Fairbury coal is shown in the mural.

A photograph of the coal mine near Indian Creek Golf Course is shown in the mural. Another photograph on the mural is Fairbury coal miners circa 1890 working for the Walton Mine.

Today, there is almost no physical reminder of the coal mines left. Marsh Park, on the west side of Fairbury, was donated to the city by the Marsh family.

These murals were funded through the generosity of the Prairie Lands Foundation.



Audio History

In 2016, the author recorded a 10-minute segment at the WJEZ radio station about Fairbury and coal mining. It can be accessed online at <http://tinyurl.com/hhhpdcm>.

At that time, I had not researched and discovered that it was a myth that Bat Masterson worked in the Fairbury coal mines.

This Book

Copies of this book will be donated to the Fairbury and Pontiac Libraries, and to the Fairbury Echoes Museum. Hopefully it will serve as a valuable resource to future historians researching family genealogy, Fairbury history, or early Illinois coal mining history.

Chapter 24

Conclusion

Unsolved Mysteries

When doing historical research, one is never able to solve all the mysteries that arise. One of the unsolved mysteries is the un-marked photograph of the initial heavy timber construction of a Fairbury coal mine. It is most likely this is a photograph of the Co-operative coal mine since it was found in the family effects of some of the founders of this mine.

An Amazing Story

The story of Fairbury and coal mining is an amazing one. Back in 1860, everyone except John and his son Henry Marsh thought the only coal in Illinois would be found along the major rivers. John and Henry started a revolution when they dug and found coal back in 1862. Coal mining quickly spread to all of Illinois as a result of their discovery.

Coal mining helped to make Fairbury a "real" town. The coal mining jobs attracted miners as far away as Europe. The coal mining industry provided jobs in Fairbury for about 80 years until the last mine was closed in 1941.

Fairbury has suffered no bad long-term results from the 80 years of mining and removal of over 1 million tons of coal. There has been no major issues with sinkholes or ground water. The unsightly piles of slag have all been used up for some other commercial purpose.

Hopefully this book will serve as a valuable reference to future historians researching family genealogy, Fairbury history, or early Illinois coal mining history.

References

All references used in this story were identified at the point they were used in the story.

Recommended Reading

Stuffed Clubs & Antimacassars by Alma Lewis James. New copies of this book are still available from the Fairbury Echoes Museum on Main Street in Fairbury.

Web Sites

None

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Dale C. Maley

Author Spotlight

Dale C. Maley is the author of the book ***Index Mutual Funds: How to Simplify Your Financial Life and Beat the Pros***. He was also a contributing author to Chapter 18 in the 2009 book ***The Bogleheads Guide to Retirement Planning***. Dale is a very successful private investor who has been a student of Financial Planning and Investing for over 33 years.

He was trained as an engineer at the University of Illinois and has been a practicing engineer for 36 years. His accomplishments as an engineer include the granting of 16 U.S. Patents and authorship of over 535 professional technical papers. He is also a member of the International Society of Automotive Engineers and the Society of Manufacturing Engineers.

Dale earned an MBA (Masters Degree in Business Administration) degree from Illinois State University. Dale became a Registered Financial Advisor in the State of Illinois in 2006. He works part-time as a fee-only financial planner. He is President of Maley Financial Planning.

One of Dale's hobbies is history, including the history of Fairbury, Illinois. He has given several lectures to local Fairbury community groups about the history of Fairbury. Both Dale and his wife are 5th generation citizens of Fairbury.

* * * * *

Also by Dale C. Maley

Fairbury History Books

History of Murders Committed in Fairbury, Illinois

Fairbury, Illinois Book Authors

Fairbury, Illinois in 1888

Fairbury, Illinois and the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition

Fairbury, Illinois History Stories

Investing Books

Index Mutual Funds: How to Simplify Your Financial Life and Beat the Pro's

How Asset Allocation Can Help You Achieve Your Financial Goals

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers about ETF's and Index Funds

Why We Don't Save Enough for Retirement and How You Can Save More

Are You Using the Right Rules to Plan Your Retirement?

How to Use Psychology to Achieve Your Financial Goals

Should Immediate Annuities Be a Tool in Your Retirement Planning Toolbox?

Who Wins the Variable Annuity Versus Mutual Fund Battle?

Will Your Children or Uncle Sam Inherit Your Estate?

What Are the Requirements for Becoming a Financial Planner?

Sell My Stocks Before the Baby Boomers Crash the Market?

How Do I Determine If I Have Saved Enough to Retire?

Don't Max Out My 401K?

Will Reverse Mortgages Be the Salvation of Baby Boomer Retirees?

Do I Need Ten, Twenty, or Thirty Times My Income to Retire?

How to Find a Good Financial Planner

Total Market or Slice-n-Dice for My Investment Portfolio?

What Safety Factor Are You Using for Your Retirement Plan?

How Much Income Do I Really Need in Retirement?

What Lessons Can We Learn from the Crash of 2008?

How to Invest for Retirement after the Crash of 2008

Rules-of-thumb or Retirement Planning Software?

Is Portfolio Rebalancing Worth It?

Do I Need Umbrella Insurance?

Got My First Job and How Do I Handle the 401K?

Are Black Swans Really Harmful to Ordinary Investors?

Should My Asset Allocation Include My Pension and Social Security?

Should I Pay Off My Mortgage Early?

How Does My Asset Allocation Compare to Everyone Else?

How Do I Maximize Retirement Income From My Portfolio?

Is Saving 10% of My Gross Income Good Enough?

Contribute to My Bad 401K or Go Taxable?

Do I Need an Investment Policy Statement?

Do I Need Long-Term Care Insurance?

Do I Need Long-Term Disability Insurance?

How to Read Your Way to Financial Wealth

How Do I Select the Correct Risk Level for My Portfolio?

How Do I Estimate Retirement Living Expenses?